MARCH 1960

Commentary

THE SUBVERSION OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
DANIEL BELL

Ideas of God — SIDNEY HOOK

Passion at Oberammergau — ROBERT GORHAM DAVIS

The Calling of American Youth — PAUL GOODMAN

A STORY **Vox Populi, Vox Goldkorn** — NORMAN STEIN

Duplicitous Mark Twain — LESLIE A. FIEDLER

OBSERVATIONS REPORT CONTROVERSY

Frank Lloyd Wright's Pictorama — WILLIAM BARRETT

Bigotry in Schoolchildren — H. D. SCHMIDT

Birth Control & Foreign Aid: A Catholic View — JAMES O'GARA

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Gordon A. Craig
Nathan Glazer
Midge Decter
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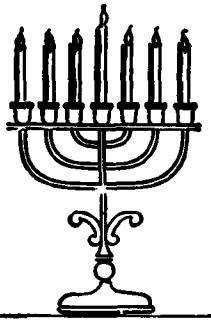

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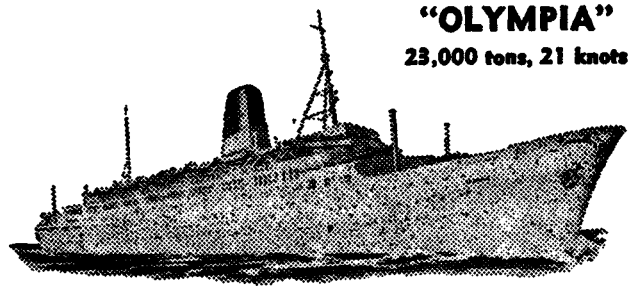

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IT MAY SEEM THAT MR. SIDNEY HOOK, IN HIS article "Ideas of God," is simply doing once more what so many philosophers have done before him—exposing the weaknesses in the various proofs that have been offered for the existence of God. But what he is really trying to say, I think, is that it *matters* whether or not reason can accept the deliverances of revelation or the arguments of faith. Modern theology has done a great deal to encourage the idea that it doesn't—so much, in fact, that one suspects the theologians of being the ultimate source of the anti-rationalist attitudes which are becoming more and more fashionable in certain literary and intellectual circles these days. Mr. Hook has even less patience with this new wave of anti-rationalism than his sober tones indicate, which perhaps explains why he has decided to disturb the peace with questions of a kind that haven't been asked very often in the past few years. That they are now being asked again strikes me as yet another sign that the general intellectual timidity of the 50's (which was felt even more strongly in the area of religious discussion than in politics) is being superseded by a vigorous new critical spirit.

MR. HOOK'S own view seems to be substantially that of the 19th-century "humanist" philosopher Ludwig Feuerbach, to whom he alludes in the course of his discussion. He believes that God is the name men give to their noblest aspirations and highest moral ideals; he also thinks, however, that these ideals can survive perfectly well on their own, without supernatural sanction. But why do men invariably feel compelled to assert that their ideals are grounded in something that transcends the "merely" human? Freud's answer (which Mr. Hook would probably go along with) was that men were not yet mature enough to do without the "illusion" of a Father in Heaven on whom they depended for support and guidance as a child depends on his earthly father. But is it a question of maturity? I very much doubt that it is. Feuerbach, who lived through the crisis of faith that agitated the 19th century so profoundly, interpreted such crises as the result of an intimation that our noblest ideals came not from any supernatural source but were actually of human origin. Yet we know of religious crises that had an entirely different character. Paul, for example, fell into despair not because he came to doubt that the Torah had divine sanction, but because Judaism could no longer satisfy his deepest spiritual needs. And the Augustinian monk Luther repudiated the church not because he ceased believing in the divine origin of its ideals, but because he came to feel that it had lost touch with its original inspiration. It is true that the crisis of faith of the 19th century cut much deeper than either of these: after all, neither Paul nor Luther ever went so far as to question the existence of God. But it may be that there was something in the nature of Protestantism itself which dictated that atheism should be the main form of defection for its children; in other words, a loss of Protestant faith may have had to be expressed in more radical terms than a loss of Jewish or Catholic faith. If that is indeed the case, the 19th-century crisis of faith represented not the "death of God," as Nietzsche and so many others thought, but merely the end of the historical dominance of Protestantism. From this perspective one might look upon the two most important ideologies of the 20th century—Fascism and Communism—as pretenders to the throne of the deposed religion. Communism has been more successful than Fascism in persuading people of its claim to the succession, but as the years go by it becomes clearer and clearer that Communism lacks the major requirement of a rightful heir: it contains no new spiritual principle. The dynamism for which it takes credit is actually attributable to the fact that the Communist countries are economically on the upward swing, and it has already become possible to imagine an "affluent" Russia suffering from the same apathy and sickness of soul that have afflicted our own country for the past ten years or so.

But if Communism is not to be the religion of the post-modern era as Protestantism was of the modern and Catholicism of the medieval, will a new religion gradually take over the world? My own guess is that this is very likely to happen. Two main conditions seem to be necessary for the birth of a new religion. First, circumstances must so far have outstripped the

[*continued on page 276*]

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The Subversion of Collective Bargaining

DANIEL BELL

■ Unhappy is a society that has run out of words to describe what is going on. So Thurman Arnold observed in connection with the language of private property—the myths and folklore of capitalism—which even thirty years ago was hopelessly out of date. How to find real words to describe the recent strike in the steel industry, or the consequences of the wage-price negotiations of the past decade? Two parties are locked in struggle, each seeking to articulate its claims over the other, while from the sidelines arise the moralistic alarms of spectators worrying about damage to the innocent public. But the desiccated language of collective bargaining is a trap; its syntax too constricting, its images too mechanical. The complex fact? The combat is a mimetic one, painfully real in the sense that emotions are aroused, but unreal because no economic loss can occur; in fact, each party, knowing in advance the price it will have to pay, pretty much gets what it sets out to get, and both end up with a profit—the corporation, usually, the greater gainer.

I am not suggesting that all this, like wrestling, is "fixed." Far from it. The antagonism between the contenders is quite genuine. But a highly intricate mechanism is at work in the game, and by now each side knows the unwritten rules. Sociologists have a phrase, "the unanticipated consequences of purposive actions," to suggest that things don't always work out as planned; and this is often the way of the world. As far as the corporations are concerned, the pattern of collective bargaining in this country follows an opposite principle which can be called "the utilized consequences of non-purposive action," meaning that even if you didn't plan it that way, you can turn it to your advantage.

Over the past decade, the corporations have precisely learned how to turn the collective bargaining process—and the strikes—to their advantage. The powerful unions gain impressive wage increases; the powerful corporations gain an excuse for impressive price increases—which, in the case of steel and auto, have in almost every instance been more than proportional to the jump in wages. Who loses? Unorganized workers (e.g. textiles), workers in marginal industries, *rentiers,* pensioners, and the like. Is this just? It is hard to define an equitable standard. A deflationary situation would benefit the *rentiers* and pensioners. But why should this group gain rather than another? The present situation reflects existing market power, which in turn shapes the rules of the game. The first thing to be determined is not who wins and who loses, but the na-

DANIEL BELL is well known for his writings on the problems of American labor. His new book, *The End of Ideology,* will be published this April by the Free Press.

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ture of the game itself, and whether it ought to be revised. The following, therefore, tries to sketch some basic characteristics of the current wage-price situation, to puncture some myths, to delineate some consequences, and to present some alternatives.

THE single most important fact about contemporary corporate capitalism is that expansion comes about through "self-financing," through retained earnings derived from high, protected prices. In formal theory—the mythical language of private property—a firm went to the capital market for financing. It floated stock, people "risked" their money and got a share of the enterprise as their equity. Later, corporations went in for institutional borrowing; insurance companies or banks would lend large sums of money to a firm, taking debentures or preferred stock in return. In either case, some outside control theoretically existed; a legal equity was always exchanged for the money raised. The actual situation is vastly different. Few firms today, except for utilities, go to the capital market for funds. Tax laws make it costly to distribute all retained earnings as dividends and then "recoup" the capital, by the investors' fiat, through new stock. The managerial decision to utilize retained earnings for expansion allows the managers to reinforce their social power and give them independence from outside control; their ideas become the decisive factor in determining the social use of capital surplus.

But it is equally important to understand that when expansion is financed through high protected prices, it is the *consumer* who does the financing, and he neither receives equity in the firm (not even the promise of future price reductions) nor has any say about how his money should be used. In effect, the whole process depends upon what I shall call a "hidden tax mechanism" through which corporations can raise huge sums of money without giving away anything in return. Public taxation is openly and hotly debated in Congress and in the legislatures; bills involving the raising or spending of money are subject to all kinds of pressure and become the cause of great political divisions. Yet under the banner of "free enterprise," a corporation can, through a protected price policy, "tax" consumers for its own purposes and do whatever it wishes with the money. In consequence of the recent expansion of steel capacity, for example, the industry—*at present demand under protected prices*—can supply all the steel the country uses in nine months rather than twelve. This means that the industry can "take" a three-month strike almost without reducing the average profit it would have made had no strike been provoked. In short, the strike is—that is to say, *was*—financed by the consumers.

The key term in the above argument, of course, is the concept of "protected price." A firm is interested primarily in its profit margins. If sales fall, the firm cuts production—and employment—rather than price. Firms with some degree of market control can do this. The chief complaint of the farmers is that, being unorganized—other than through government crop reduction programs—they cannot adjust production to demand, but have to let prices fall.

To anyone who has read with care the Kefauver Committee reports of 1958 on "administered prices" in the steel and auto industries, it will be clear that these industries exercise an extraordinary degree of market control and thus have been able to place themselves in a protected position. We can best understand how such control is exercised by looking at the "standard volume" system for setting prices used by the auto industry. This system, which was developed by Donaldson Brown for General Motors in 1924, is based on an equation of three variables—price, estimated average rate of plant operation calculated in terms of a percentage of total annual capacity, and net return on investment. The price set for a single car is thus a function of the other two variables. But how are these variables determined? Net return on investment is simple: General Motors has decided that it must get roughly 20 per cent

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a year after taxes every year. "Estimated average rate of plant operation" is more complicated, however. The company figures in its best year on reaching only 80 per cent of its theoretical maximum operating capacity because of seasonal and other fluctuations in sales; in an *average* year, it figures on reaching 80 per cent of the production that can be achieved in its best year: thus it figures, theoretically, on using 64 per cent of its capacity in any normal year. But in actual practice, the "standard volume" has generally been calculated on a 55 per cent capacity. That is, General Motors so sets its prices as to plan for a return of about 20 per cent after taxes on the assumption that its plants will operate through the year for a total of only 180 days, or 36 weeks. (General Motors could "take" a four-month strike and still come out at its predetermined margin by operating for the rest of the year at full capacity.)

The long-range target of "standard volume" is to make it possible for General Motors to recoup its net investment in five years, but this goal has been surpassed by a phenomenal margin. In 1955, for example, net earnings (after interest and income taxes) were sufficient for the company to recoup its *entire* net plant investment in only two years. The American Institute of Management, which made this calculation, pointed out that such a record was not exceptional for General Motors, but was, "in fact, a continuing characteristic of the enterprise being equalled or bettered in 12 of the preceding 20 years."

From 1950 to 1957, for every year except the last, General Motors' actual sales were, on the average, about 30 per cent higher than the "standard volume" on which the company set its prices.* When asked whether some of these gains from the large volume should not have been passed along to consumers through lower prices, Harlow Curtice, then head of General Motors, told the Kefauver Committee: "[Our prices] are as low as they can be and still produce the indicated return on the net worth at the standard volume." Even, it would seem, when actual output was 50 per cent greater than the "standard volume." As the Kefauver Committee said rather stodgily in its report: "It is clear that the use of standard volume as the basis of pro-rating expected costs and the desired aggregate profit in order to establish prices adds a considerable element of rigidity to these prices."

What this has meant in terms of the price power of General Motors can be grasped by tracing the company's net worth. In 1947, General Motors had a net worth of $1,428,000,000—on which it made a return, before taxes, of 38.8 per cent. A decade later, General Motors' net worth was $4,582,000,000—on which it made a return of 35.6 per cent before taxes. Of this increase in net worth of more than 3 billion dollars (or 221 per cent), all but $395 million came from profits which were ploughed back into the company. In short, the increase came from consumers who were making an "involuntary investment" in General Motors.

One important clue to the efficiency of a company and its ability to reduce prices is "the break-even point"—a measure that is based on the relationship between costs (divided into fixed and variable) and sales—and that gives us the figure at which the company begins turning a profit. Computations by Mr. Fred Gardner, a prominent management consultant, indicated that, including a high allowance for depreciation, General Motors' "break-even point" in 1956 was 48.8 per cent of sales. Sales, of course, do not represent full capacity; if one took full capacity into account, General Motors' "break-even point" would probably come to somewhere between 40 and 45 per cent of capacity.

These figures become even more signifi-

* Thus, in 1950, General Motors estimated its "standard volume" at 2,250,000 units, in order to give it a 20 per cent net return, and sold 3,812,000 units, or a 69 per cent margin of safety. In 1955, "standard volume" was 3,000,000 units, and factory sales were 4,368,000, or 54 per cent above target. In 1957, when "standard volume" was estimated at 3,470,000, sales were a shade under (3,418,000)—the only year of the eight in which the target was not exceeded.

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cant in the light of the fact that Ford's "break-even point" in 1956 was 64.7 per cent and Chrysler's 87.4. Clearly General Motors has little to fear in the way of real price competition from the other automobile companies. In a serious price war, General Motors, with its superior efficiency, could probably run Ford and Chrysler into the ground. It doesn't do so, first, because a position as a single auto monopolist would simply invite public regulation, and second, because Chrysler and Ford, as the marginal firms, hold up a neat "price umbrella" for General Motors.

Since the products of the steel industry are more diversified than those of the auto companies, the steel companies do not use any such simple measure as "standard volume" for setting prices. In general, the industry figures on making a 15 per cent net return on investment when operating at 100 per cent of capacity. U. S. Steel argues that every dollar's worth of increase in employment costs will lead to an increase of more than $2 in total costs of production, and sets its prices accordingly. How does this claim square with U. S. Steel's "break-even point"?

In its presentation to a government commission investigating monopoly in 1937 (the Temporary National Economic Commission), U. S. Steel estimated that its "break-even point" then was 63.3 per cent of sales. In 1956, an analysis by management consultant Gardner for the Kefauver Committee showed the "break-even point" to be 44.3 per cent of sales. After the price increases in 1957—which had followed a large union wage increase—the "break-even point" went *down* to 38.6 per cent of sales, or (since sales are lower than capacity) about 32 per cent of capacity. In other words, by working less than two full days a week, U. S. Steel could move out of the "red" and make money.

How low should a "break-even point" be? The average "break-even point" of all U. S. industry is roughly 50 per cent of capacity. A "break-even point" between 50 and 60 per cent of capacity is considered "sound" since it gives most companies a margin wide enough to cover their fixed costs if sales fall sharply. In twenty-five years of computing "break-even points" for 1500 companies, Mr. Gardner testified, the lowest he ever encountered was that of U. S. Steel. The Corporation, he said, could cut its prices by 10 per cent, and still end up with a "break-even point" of 50 per cent of capacity.

The nub of the analysis, as applied specifically to the wage-price situation of 1957 (the last major wage-price increase in steel), is that when wages went up, prices—and profits—went up *even higher*. After the new contract with the union had been put into practice, a correlational technique showed a higher rate of profit at a lower rate of operating costs than in the previous year, and a decline in the "break-even point" as well. In brief, it was quite clear that the steel companies had used the negotiations as an excuse for boosting prices, in order to jack up their profit margins. As the Kefauver Committee concluded, "U. S. Steel [can] cover its costs at an operating rate below 40 per cent of capacity and make very satisfactory profits while a substantial part of its capacity lies idle."

THE point of all this (to return to the role of collective bargaining) is that the net effect of union pressure—apart from the gains which have been won for the small group of highly organized workers—has been to help install a mechanism whereby the large corporation is able to strengthen its price position in the market. In the past, price protection was achieved by "basing point" systems (now outlawed), price umbrellas (in which U. S. Steel set the lead), or informal collusion. Today the union serves as the vehicle. (According to Walter Reuther, for *every* dollar of increased labor costs since 1947, General Motors by 1956 imposed about $3.75 in cumulative price increases on the American car buyer. In effect, the United Auto Workers, taking a small share of the increased profits, had become, albeit unwillingly, the "junior partner" of

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General Motors.) The companies can truthfully say that they do not like the union negotiations, since other than wage demands are often involved (work rules, fringe benefits, etc). And the companies are usually inclined to resist the union's demands strenuously. But it invariably turns out that the union negotiation offers a lovely opportunity to increase prices—and, with exquisite irony, to blame the union for inflation.

Are the unions responsible for inflation? Industry's argument is that they are, because by raising costs, they set off a wage-price spiral. But simple economic logic exposes the patent falsity of this charge. To determine the true effect of union wage pressure, one has first to make a distinction between the *structure of wages* (i.e., the relative spread between industries—say, steel and textiles), and the *level of wages,* which is the total wage bill in relation to other economic factors. What union pressure may do is to affect the *structure* of wages: that is, it can increase the gap between one group of workers (who have a strong union) and another (which does not). It is quite possible that wage and subsequent price increases in one area of the economy *may* have a linked effect on others—though with all the propaganda about the wage-price spiral, the actual spread of this effect has *never* been traced, and even so eminent a conservative economist as Milton Friedman of the University of Chicago doubts that it can go very far.*

For actually the degree of impact of a wage increase in one area on the rest of the economy depends, simply, upon the stock of money in circulation. If this stock were held constant, then an increase in wages and prices in one sector could only cause a shift in the share of money to that particular sector—provided it were strong enough to impose its increases (i.e., provided that people needed the products of that sector more than they needed other products; or, in technical terms, the demand was relatively inelastic). Thus, there would be a change in the *structure,* but no effect upon the general *level* of wages and prices.

In practice, however, money supply is not held constant, but goes up (theoretically about 4 per cent a year, or slightly ahead of the growth pace of the economy). This increase in the supply of money, which is the result of political decisions by the monetary controllers, has a far greater effect on the general price level than wage pressure could ever possibly have. The current inflationary situation is due in large measure to the $13 billion budgetary deficit that the government ran in meeting the 1957–1958 recession. Although the administration refused to use direct government spending to counter the recession, it achieved the same effect by indirect methods (accelerated spending on committed programs, lower tax receipts, and the like). If any single factor can be held responsible for the inflation-deflation seesaw of recent years, it is the erratic timing of the Federal Reserve Board, which has either stepped a little too hard on the gas or jerked the brake a little too abruptly (as it is doing now). While the business community contradicts the basic precepts of economic theory in ascribing inflation to union wage pressure, conservative economists who know better have kept shamefully quiet.

But there is another argument which holds that union wage pressure can put a particular firm or a particular industry in a difficult competitive position vis-à-vis other firms or products—it can "price them out of the market." This argument is plausible in theory, except that if it were true, production would fall and unemployment would mount—which does not seem to be the case in the relevant sectors of the economy. Actually, the one element in the whole wage-price picture which has been almost completely ignored—the emergence

* The steel companies themselves were in a wonderfully quixotic position. On the one hand they claimed that steel wages, by rising faster than productivity, were inflationary; on the other hand, they protested vehemently that the effect of the increase of steel prices—which should reflect the steel wage inflationary pressure—was "negligible" on the cost of living.

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of a large class of non-production workers within the manufacturing firms, and the consequent rise in salary costs—is a more likely candidate, if any single one is to be cast, for the role of "villain" than the unions.

By now it is commonplace that in the last decade the white-collar force has been expanding rapidly while the blue-collar force has remained virtually stable. This increase in white-collar force, however, has taken place not only in the so-called "tertiary" area (insurance, banks, real estate, services, education, recreation, and the like), but—through the proliferation of administrative services (personnel, marketing, merchandising, etc.), of research, and of automation—within the area of manufacturing itself. From 1947 to 1957, the number of non-production workers in manufacturing increased by 60 per cent (from 2,400,000 to 3,900,000) while the blue-collar force remained almost stationary (a little under 13,000,000). In 1947, salaries (the mode of payment to white-collar workers) were one-fourth of the labor costs in manufacturing; by 1957 they had gone up to one-third.

There are two important consequences to this change in the composition of the work force. One relates to productivity, the other to unit labor costs. In all their propaganda on the effect of wage increases, the corporations have talked of the rise in *employment* costs—but this is never broken down into unit *wage* costs (usually the unionized sector) and unit *salary* costs. Given the nature of industrial organization, direct production costs (wage costs) are more immediately subject to control than white-collar costs (salary costs). In other words, if productivity is broken down on a man-hour per production worker basis, and on a man-hour per salaried worker basis, the corporation can recoup its costs more easily in the first sector, where it can achieve economies and technological savings by substituting machines or tightening production schedules. The rise in the proportion of the salaried worker has acted as a drag on productivity, and on unit costs.

In sum, the argument I am making is that a significant share of the rise in manufacturing costs in the last decade has been due not to direct wage costs, but to an extraordinarily large increase in salary costs, which usually become an added fixed cost.

The Federal Reserve data available before the recession of 1957–58 shows this shift in cost burdens quite clearly. Between 1947 and 1957, *unit* payroll costs (total wages and salaries) rose 26 per cent, while unit *wage* costs increased by only 16 per cent.* Much of the payroll rise was a consequence of the rise in unit *salary* costs which in 1957 were almost *30 per cent* higher than in 1953.

This burden becomes even greater during a recession, for when production falls the large corporations cut down their blue-collar force while the white-collar force is maintained whole.

The picture within the steel industry is instructive. This table shows the steadily rising slope of salary employment and the fluctuating course of blue-collar employment.†

STEEL EMPLOYMENT (in thousands)

	Production Workers	*Administrative, Professional & Clerical*
1950	532.9	78.1
1951	560.2	83.3
1952	486.5	84.2
1953	559.6	93.7
1954	492.5	88.3
1955	544.6	90.7
1956	532.6	97.6
1957	537.0	105.7

But even more instructive when we consider the effect on costs of this new balance between production and non-production workers is a comparison of what happens to each class during a recession.

* In the period from 1953 to 1957, when the greatest increase in non-production workers took place, salary payments rose by 37 per cent while wage payments to the blue-collar force rose by only 7 per cent.

† Source: Background statistics bearing on the steel dispute, Tables 3a. and 3b. U. S. Department of Labor.

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STEEL EMPLOYMENT

	Mid-1956	*Autumn 1958*	*Drop*
Semi-skilled workers	250,000	200,000	20%
Skilled workers and foremen	175,000	155,000	11%
Laborers, helpers, misc.	120,000	90,000	25%
Clerical and sales	75,000	75,000	None
Professional and technical	30,000	30,000	None
Administrative	10,000	10,000	None

Two other items from the Kefauver data round out the picture. When the steelworkers (or other such unions) win wage increases, the companies usually give "tandem" increases to the unorganized non-union workers. When U. S. Steel submitted cost data to the Kefauver committee on the effects of the 1957 negotiations, it indicated that its employment costs had gone up 21 cents an hour, against a union claim that wage costs had only increased 16.4 cents. "Supplementary information provided by the corporation disclosed that the 21-cent figure is a weighted average of benefits extended to 161,500 members of the United Steelworkers, estimated at 19.4 cents per hour, *and simultaneous increases granted to 47,600 other* employees, estimated at 26.6 cents per hour." The union in its data had estimated that non-union employees (principally white collar) would receive the same cents-per-hour adjustment as union members. *Instead, non-members received increases which on the average were 37 per cent higher than the increase called for in the union contract.* As the Kefauver committee said primly: "This may be excellent personnel policy, but there is some question as to the propriety of charging the cost of such a policy to the union agreement."

It should also be observed that in calculating the "break-even point" for the steel industry, the Kefauver committee analyst used the generous concept of "standby cost" rather than "fixed cost." Fixed cost includes the conventional items of overhead, interest payments, depreciation, and the like. Standby cost covers all these plus management salaries, payments to supervisory and maintenance employees and to the sales and office personnel who are usually retained even though sales and production may fall. This is obviously a more realistic concept than fixed cost since such salaries do become a "fixed" charge for the corporation. Nevertheless it is a fact that the "break-even point" kept falling steadily after every union agreement *even though standby costs went up*—which indicates how little the corporation actually suffered from these agreements.

What then, does the argument add up to? Because the steel companies refuse to give breakdowns on unit costs, one cannot fix the relative weights accurately, but the inference is warranted that a large portion of their increased employment costs—and those of other major manufacturing enterprises—is the consequence not of union pressure but of the rise of a salary sector which has become an added fixed expense.

This would seem to give the unions a powerful bargaining point. They could say, in effect, that the production workers, by raising productivity, are pulling their weight in a situation of increased costs, while the white-collar workers are not. But the unions can't. For they are desperately trying to organize the growing white-collar sector within the manufacturing industries, which makes it impossible for them to "blame" these groups for benefiting unduly from wage increases and pushing up employment costs.

THE recent steel strike will not change the basic pattern I have been sketching here. If anything it will tend to reinforce the power of the corporations. Despite the "shotgun settlement," the terms show clearly that the industry was the economic victor, though the union may have gained a certain "symbolic satisfaction" in having avoided an even greater disaster.

From a *rational* point of view, there was little ground for a strike. The union knew that this was not "its year." It had no new radical demands to make. It also knew that its wage levels, because of previous victories,

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were higher than those of auto, with which it has been linked in historic tandem. Privately it was willing to settle for modest wage increases. It certainly was not going to challenge the industry on prices. Financially, the steel companies could easily afford a wage increase *without* raising their prices. The profit figures for the first half of 1959 were spectacular and even embarrassing. Profit as per cent of stockholders' equity, after taxes, was 14.2 per cent, *the highest in twelve years;* profit as per cent of sales, after taxes, was 7.6 per cent, *the highest since 1950.* That some of this was due to stepped-up production because of inventory buying by customers who were anticipating a strike merely proves that the strike was not caused by economics. Everybody knew, in fact, that the companies had decided to force a strike no matter what the union did.

For years the industry has been spoiling for a strike, and this time the situation was favorable; the companies recognized that they could afford a long one. Technological development has been so great that at present levels of demand the industry can fill virtually all the orders it gets by operating for only nine months of the year. (In 1958, the industry operated at 60.6 per cent of capacity; in the fiscal year ending June 1959, it was at 77.5 per cent of capacity.) The rest of the time can be absorbed in short work weeks, lay-offs, or a strike. The effects are the same, and the economic loss minimal.* And the industry wanted a strike.

For years the industry has smarted at the union's power. During World War II, the union had forced through a wage rationalization program to even out rates between jobs and end the discriminatory practices by which supervisors could practice favoritism. In the Inland Steel case, in 1949, which went to the Supreme Court, the union won a break-through on pensions. And fortuitous timing on contract expirations had allowed the steel union to come in on the upswing of the business cycles and come out with larger wage gains than other unions. But even though the corporations had learned how to take advantage of the wage pattern for price increases, there were important psychological and symbolic issues at stake. This was particularly true at U. S. Steel, where in 1958 a new management team, composed of Roger Blough as chairman of the Board and Conrad Cooper as industrial relations vice-president, had taken over. Blough is a lawyer with no experience in production; his forte is finance. Cooper is an engineer, with little feel for the human give-and-take of a bargaining situation. These two had replaced the old team of Ben Fairless, a production man who had come up through the mills, and John Stephens, whose background was in personnel. Fairless and Stephens had been pragmatic operators, tough-minded but not rigid, inclined to make a "deal" whenever it seemed necessary. Recognizing the vanity and weakness of Dave McDonald, the union chief, they had adopted the tactic of "sweet-talking" him, boosting his ego, making him feel like an equal, arranging for joint trips to the steel plants, where Fairless and McDonald—the two symbols of Management and Labor—would stride the floor together. And McDonald, pipe in mouth, chest puffed out, and distinguishing himself from that red-haired, radical fellow Walter Reuther, would talk in orotund tones of the "mutual trusteeship" concept of management and labor, the equal responsibility of union and industry to free enterprise.

But Blough and Cooper would have none of this charade. Both were men of principle, ideologists, and their main principle was that labor should be put in its proper place. In an age of growing managerial power,

* The steel industry, then, has to some extent begun to approach the situation that existed in coal when John L. Lewis would order staggered strikes that created a three-day work week in the industry. Newspaper editorialists screamed about the loss of production, but as a detailed analysis later showed, there were, given the level of demand, roughly 165 workdays in the industry anyway, so that it made no difference whatever whether the miners struck or were laid off. Lewis had called the strikes in part as a service to the industry since the anti-trust laws forbade collusion of companies to limit production and maintain prices.

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when the corporate manager was taking credit for the remarkable performance of American industry, when managing itself was deemed a great new complex skill involving the administration of salesmen, production men, finance men, merchandising men, public relations men, engineers, and personnel men, there was no reason to assume that union leaders should be treated as equals—for labor, after all, was only one of a large number of "coordinates of production." Labor was to be reduced to its proper dimensions as a small problem, to be handled by the labor relations department.

Equally, the legal mind and the engineering brain wanted to tie up the ragged ends of the work rules issue. The steel companies have always had the right to introduce new machines or any other technological changes without interference from the union. But existing practices were another matter. In many plants, informal work rules or traditional ways of doing things had become the norm, arising, as is common in any human situation, out of custom and habit. To the engineer, such practices may be "irrational." To the worker it is his "way." The two are bound to clash. In 1945, when the wage rationalization analysis of U. S. Steel was completed, Cooper, who had been brought into the company to implement the program, insisted that the new contract contain a pledge by the workers to do a "fair day's work." Like the verbiage of loyalty oaths, this phrase is mere mumbo-jumbo; everyone accepts the idea of "a fair day's work for a fair day's pay"—but how is a fair day's work to be measured? To the surprise of all parties, Mr. Cooper had a measure. A "fair day's work"—and this was written into the contract negotiated on May 8, 1946—is "that amount of work that can be produced by a qualified employee when working at a normal pace. . . . a normal pace is equivalent to a man walking, without load, on smooth level ground at a rate of three miles per hour." Presumably, therefore, the energy that would be used to walk 24 miles a day should go into a fair day's work. Cooper began applying this visceratonic definition to every job in U. S. Steel. The following year Phil Murray gave the corporation an ultimatum. The definition might remain, but all existing work rules were to be preserved or the union would refuse to sign any contract—and the companies capitulated. Thus the so-called 2-B clause was frozen into the contract. U. S. Steel has never forgiven that ultimatum. They regarded it as a violation of the previous contract. Technically it was, since Lee Pressman, then the union counsel, had, without realizing the consequences, accepted the company's authority to change work rules, and the following year Murray had repudiated the agreement negotiated by Pressman. A more flexible management would have understood that the program was inherently unworkable anyway. Men are not automatons, and despite time-study rules and all the paraphernalia of "scientific" work analysis, they will go on their own, stubborn ways. But U. S. Steel has rarely been known for its flexibility.

THE fact is that the 2-B rule was primarily a symbolic test of authority. There was no vital economic issue at stake. The corporations talked of the losses in efficiency, but when pressed by George Taylor (the head of the government fact-finding board) to document their case, they could only come up with one example—the "man in the air-conditioned crane cab," which was entirely irrelevant. And the same symbolic issues of authority and power were the crucial factors in the recent steel strike; real economic questions were again nonexistent.

In the end, the industry lost the symbolic fight. It was quite clear that the work rules issue could not be translated into any terms capable of enlisting public support. Moreover, management's stubborn insistence on this point served to solidify the union ranks. At the start of the strike, the company had made some headway among the steel workers by raising the spectre of inflation. And a strike conducted solely to increase wages would not have spurred enthusiasm among

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the workers. But the work rules issue gave the union a rallying cry meaningful to every steel worker in the form of a threatened speed-up, or a cut in piece-rate for certain specific jobs.

And yet, in economic terms, the steel companies did uncommonly well in the negotiations. For one thing, they have virtually succeeded in knocking the cost-of-living clause out of the contract, thus putting a fixed ceiling on wage increases. Under the new arrangement the steel workers can get a maximum of six more cents an hour over a thirty-month period, but at the same time the companies can deduct rising insurance costs from the cost-of-living increment—which will in effect wipe the latter out altogether as an expense. Furthermore, since the contract is not retroactive, the steel companies also get a two-months' free ride on wages. In straight wage terms, the steel workers will receive an increase of 8.2 cents an hour *in December 1960,* more than a year after the strike, and a second, 7.6 cents, increase in October 1961. In straight cost terms, the increase will come to 3.75 per cent an hour, as against gains by the steel union of 4.5 per cent an hour in the can industry, and of 5 per cent an hour in aluminum.

Meanwhile, prices are already beginning to shoot up, and to paraphrase an old remark, "before they hurt." A story in the *Wall Street Journal* recently carried the headline: "Steel Pact Triggers Factory Price Boosts." The lead paragraph quoted a furniture manufacturer as saying: "Two weeks ago, I was considering raising prices a little in March or April but since the steel settlement I've decided to increase them at least 3 per cent and do it as soon as possible." One retailer remarked: "This type of settlement makes it easier . . . to bring my markup back up. Most of my customers work at Crucible Steel Co., and they know that the more they make the more they will have to pay for most products, including furniture. I started buying more furniture here as soon as I heard about the steel settlement." The fact that furniture has little to do with steel, and that furniture costs have not yet really gone up is, of course, irrelevant in such a conditioned atmosphere. The price spiral is already under way.

And at some point during the year, when much of the publicity has died down, the steel industry will quietly raise its prices. Where then, does the whole situation leave the union, and the country?

No DOGMATIC or simple answers are possible. The Joint Economic Committee of the Congress, headed by Senator Douglas, in warning of the power of the large corporations "to raise the price of their goods or services in the absence of excess demand pressure," suggests the need for "government participation in the price-wage setting process . . . [at least] for a fact-finding procedure . . . on the justification and desirability of such proposed increases." The economist Abba Lerner has proposed that where capacity lies idle, corporations be forbidden to raise prices, and when pockets of unemployment in an industry persist, unions be barred from asking for wage increases. Such yardsticks are important to have, though it is hard to see how Lerner's proposal could be carried out administratively without becoming overly bureaucratic and cumbersome.

But surely more is involved than the question of price increases. What is really at stake is the question of the "legitimacy of power" of the managerial groups. Who gives the manager his mandate? The traditional theory of private property has little legal or social validity in the age of the large corporation. A more plausible justification of managerial power is the argument that it allows for multiple, decentralized decision-centers to counter the dangers of arbitrary bureaucratic planning. But what checks exist on the enormous market power of the large corporation itself? Certainly not the market. As I have already tried to show, the corporations have been able to create a "hidden tax mechanism" which allows them to manipulate the market and to raise large sums of money for private

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expansion. Is such a thing socially desirable? For the situation amounts to this: in response to their own drives for status and power, the large automobile and oil companies have created a huge productive capacity, which in turn forces them to wage large coercive campaigns in order to stimulate consumption of their products—not only through advertising, but through political lobbying as well. One consequence is that Congress can pass a 12 billion dollar road-building program more easily than it can appropriate a billion dollars for schools. And we have the ludicrous spectacle, in New York and Los Angeles, of fantastic sums being levied for expressways—with houses torn down, views blocked, and open spaces cluttered—while public transport, which is faster and more economical, goes hang. Except for a few books by people like A. A. Berle, there has been little critical study in recent years of the social power of the corporations, and the questions of limits to that power.

As for collective bargaining, the other term in the general situation, we can say with some degree of truth that it has almost reached the end of its long career as an instrumentality for economic and social justice. The fact that in the major industries the big corporations have been able to subvert negotiations with unions by utilizing them as a device for masking a protected price policy calls the social utility of collective bargaining into deep question.

Collective bargaining has always been regarded as the chief means of achieving the traditional goals of unionism. These goals can be listed as follows:

a) to raise sub-standard wages;

b) to eliminate wages as a lever for comparative advantage between firms;

c) to eliminate discrimination and favoritism in the treatment of workers and to establish the worker's conception of equitable standards: e.g. the principle of seniority in lay-offs and promotions;

d) to provide a juridical mechanism for grievances outside the arbitrary decisions of management;

e) to provide basic security and welfare for the individual worker through "fringe" benefits like medical care, pensions, and supplementary unemployment benefits;

f) to obtain a "fair share" of the profits of a firm;

g) to redistribute income in favor of the lower class groups;

h) to maintain consumer purchasing power, particularly during recessions.

Considering that the modern American trade union movement is only twenty-five years old, the unions have been remarkably successful in achieving most of their goals. But where does the labor movement go from here? The answer depends upon one's conception of the social role of the trade union. If a union's aim is simply to get a higher wage for its own members—the attitude of the building trades union, par excellence—it can then only become a partner in a collusive enterprise which strong-arms the rest of the community. This is what has happened—albeit unwillingly—to the auto and steel unions. But if the union has a wider view of its role in society—and seeks to enlist liberal and intellectual support for its claims—then it may have to begin reorienting itself and to think of collective bargaining in a new and different light.

Of the eight objectives outlined above, the unions have been able to achieve the first four, and most of the fifth. But the three strictly economic aims, which form the heart of present-day collective bargaining, have gone by the board. There has been little redistribution of shares between profits and wages, either as proportion of the national income or within firms. Nor has collective bargaining been the agency for maintaining purchasing power. The chief result of bargaining has been to favor strong unions at the expense of weak ones, to strengthen the monopoly positions of highly organized industries, and in consequence, to affect the *structure* of wages, but not the level (i.e. comparative shares). And the added fact that wage increases now run close to the ceiling levels of increases in productivity

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sets strong outer limits on the ability of unions to have *any* salutary effect on the economy through bargaining.

A simpler mechanism than collective bargaining for raising the standard of living of low-income groups, or maintaining purchasing power during recessions, or creating relative equity between different groups of wage workers, is government fiscal policy. The unions could use their influence to win a tax reduction for the lower-income classes of the country; this would be more equitable than pressing for the advantage of a particular group of workers, for it would be "across the board." Another thing the unions might do is exert pressure on the corporations to reduce prices, which would provide for a more equitable distribution of savings in productivity. Admittedly this is difficult. A union, its leaders say, exists to serve its own members; and the best way to do this is to fight for wage increases. As for other workers, let them go and do the same. But if union leaders adopt such a completely parochial view, they then forfeit the claims unionism has to the sympathies and allegiances of the liberal middle class and intellectuals. To help other workers—especially during recessions—it may be necessary to forgo direct wage increases and rely on government tax policy as the economic gyroscope. To engage in such action, however, the labor movement would have to become more political and begin thinking in broader social terms than it has grown accustomed to doing.

But is there no further innovating role for collective bargaining? I think that there is, that one last historic step remains to be taken—a true annual wage. Sociologically, this is the most revolutionary step the unions can take, but they will have to take it if they wish to consummate their long effort to give workers a legitimate place in society.

Historically, the worker has been treated as a commodity, to be paid by the piece or by the hour for his labor. However much one may declare (formally, as in the Clayton Act, or piously in Labor Day addresses) that labor is not a commodity, the existing system of wage payment shows that that is exactly how the worker is regarded. General Motors still pays its blue-collar force on the basis of every tenth-of-an-hour worked, and despite some union-imposed restrictions, such as "call-in" pay (which guarantees a man at least four hours pay if he is called to work that day), wages are still determined by time or piece, as with any other commodity. The most bitter complaint of auto workers is that they have no way of knowing, from one week to the next, how many hours they will work in any given week; through the year, a man may get as many as twenty "short work weeks."

All this emphasizes the distinction between the production worker (who is regarded simply as "labor") and the salaried worker who is paid by the week, month, or the year. Salaried workers (usually of the white-collar class) are laid off less often (they are carried as part of standby, or fixed, costs), they are entitled to sick leave, excused for jury duty, and given a whole host of amenities often denied to the production worker. Why? Such practices are in part a carryover from the old notion of the production worker as an "interchangeable hand," and in part simply a status distinction enforced by traditional cultural attitudes toward manual labor. But is there any reason of an economic, sociological, or moral character for this "double standard" to continue? Increased costs, says management. Yet what of the gain in status that would accrue to the worker—the gain in psychological as well as economic security—if the double standard were abolished.*

* Increased costs has been the cry of employers against every innovating device from shorter hours to pensions. Fifty years ago, corporations resisted workmen's compensation for accidents and the installation of safety devices on the ground of increased costs. Yet today, in the changed climate of public opinion, what corporation would object to installing safety devices on the grounds of cost? On the grounds of mental health, one can justify the increased costs of reducing the pace of work, or the extreme division of labor. On the grounds of justice, one can argue for the elimination of the treatment of labor as a commodity.

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In March 1958, the International Business Machines Corporation made the unprecedented move of placing its 20,000 regular production workers on a weekly salary basis—a move which, surprisingly, received little public attention. Like most blue-collar workers, the IBM production men had been paid on an hourly rate. As salaried employees they became entitled to full pay during absences due to illness or accident, as well as to paid time off for authorized personal reasons (jury duty, death in the family, etc.). IBM is not, of course, in a "seasonal" industry, and has therefore been able to take this step with comparative ease; but few industries in the U. S. today are seasonal—even auto is not wholly so—and those who are can use counter-seasonal pricing devices to even out demand.

It is unlikely that American industry will eliminate piece work and hourly rates voluntarily; union pressure is needed through collective bargaining. But it is also unlikely that the unions, psychologically dispirited or with aging fat-cat leaders, will launch the necessary campaign in the near future. Nevertheless, such a move would be the most important means the unions could find for reducing the "status barrier" between blue-collar and white-collar work —the very barrier in the way of organizing the white-collar workers. And without organizing the white-collar worker, American unionism, in the long run, cannot survive.

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ROBERT GORHAM DAVIS

Passion at Oberammergau

■ This summer, if all goes as expected, some 400,000 people will travel to Oberammergau in Bavaria to watch the spectacle of Christ's being reviled and sent to his death by the Jews. In a period of reviving anti-Semitism, brought finally to public attention by the defacing of synagogues, the visitors to Oberammergau will see, under highly emotional circumstances, a play in which the synagogue is a rallying point for evil and in which the Jewish people accept gleefully for themselves and their children blood-guilt for the murder of the Christian savior.

"To the cross with him! To the cross!" cry the Jewish people. "He dies on the cross. Hail Israel! The enemy is overthrown! His death is our safety! We are freed! Long live, long live the synagogue."

The melodramatically simple picture of the perfidious and deicide Jews which the Oberammergau passion play offers—and which provides most of its dramatic liveliness—is to be found in other passion plays, of course, and in much medieval popular literature. But in its modern form the Oberammergau passion play represents neither the survival nor the faithful recreation of a naive medieval mystery play. It is an intricate, highly professional production combining prologues, choruses, dialogue, *tableaux vivants,* and mass action scenes with as many as seven hundred performers on the vast stage at once. The huge permanent buildings on the stage, though now simpler in architecture than their baroque predecessors, are massively classical in design.

The text of the play underwent constant and substantial revision from 1660 to 1860. The revisers were monastery-trained priests, and the play became greatly elaborated and then simplified again, according to the changing tastes of the time. The last version was by "the former royal clerical councillor at Oberammergau, the late J. A. Daisenberger" in 1860 and has been very little altered since. The more recent changes have been rather in the mode of production and acting. The villagers of Oberammergau are not to blame, says a writer in the official handbook of 1950, "if the world has not stood still and if the play of 1950 cannot be in any respect—nor in things material—the modest peasant play of times gone by."

The modern Oberammergau passion play, one of the goals of most of this year's conducted tours of Europe, is a sophisticated production which takes its point of departure from medieval texts, but uses every theatrical device to make its version of the events of the passion as emotionally stirring as possible for a modern audience. The man who has directed the play since 1922, and who was largely responsible for the reconstruction of the theater in 1930, is Georg Johann Lang. He was one of the first in Oberammergau to become a Nazi, and in 1946 was arrested by the occupation authorities because of his work for Goebbels' prop-

ROBERT GORHAM DAVIS, a literary critic whose articles and reviews have appeared in this and other journals, is professor of English at Columbia University.

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aganda ministry. In 1950 Lang was in charge again of the entire production.

The picture which the play draws of the Jews—usurious, bloodthirsty, possessed by "the fury of a blinded nation's rage"—combines some of the worst of medieval and modern prejudices. The sinister character given the Jew in popular literature of the Middle Ages so encouraged superstitious fears that at times of social disaster, as during the Black Death, whole communities of Jews were burned alive. Pogroms were especially likely to occur during Holy Week as a result of the emotions aroused by Good Friday sermons. It is hardly necessary to discuss the way in which the Nazis used the idea of the Jew created by modern anti-Semitism. It served to provoke and justify scourgings, murders, blood-guilt on a scale never before known in history. Munich, capital of Bavaria, was the city in which the Nazi movement first grew strong.

Of a feeling of responsibility for such German crimes—or of the need for public repentance for them—there is no indication whatsoever in the text and official account of the Passion Play as it was presented last in 1950. It is not that the municipality of Oberammergau would consider references to contemporary history inappropriate. On the contrary, the preface to the edition of 1934 said that the play would be given with special thankfulness that year because the new movement in Germany had rescued the people, *"des gottgewollten Volkstum,"* from Bolshevism and every kind of spiritual plague. It quoted from a German critic of 1850, who declared that when the promised day arrived on which the German people would be one folk again and know their strength freely and joyously, and when the breath of a new life revived the spirit of German folk culture, then should thanks go to the Oberammergau passion play.

The text of the play in 1950 was virtually unchanged from that of preceding decades and will be the same in 1960. A letter from Oberammergau informs me that all revisions have been voted down. The whole effect of this version is to make it clear that the Jews brought their destruction upon themselves. In one of the *tableaux* from the Old Testament which precede each section of the play, Jerusalem is identified with the disobedient Queen Vashti whom King Ahasuerus puts aside in favor of Esther. Jerusalem has been warned to return to God, not to thrust aside with mockery the hand held lovingly out to her, but alas

> With evil mind she rushed on
> Therefore, thus saith the Lord
> This people is abhorred.
> See Vashti—see the proud one is cast out!
> Showing God's purpose for the synagogue.

This chorus ends with an injunction to the Jews to "destroy from out your inmost hearts the leaven of your sins."

On his way to Calvary, Jesus prophesies to the daughters of Jerusalem the day to come when they shall say, " 'Blessed are the barren and the wombs that shall never bear, and the paps that never gave suck.' They shall cry to the mountain: 'fall on us' and to the hills 'cover us.' " This is scriptural, of course, but it is spoken without pitying love and without any plea to God to avert such a terrible fate. As prophecy it holds equally vividly for the years of Hitler's reign and for the year 70 C.E. when the Romans destroyed the temple and killed most of the people of Jerusalem. Less than ten years before the Oberammergau passion play was revived in 1950, bulldozers were literally covering with hills of earth the mass graves of Jewish women and children.

If Germans who were the instruments of this terrible vengeance feel it ironical to act the part of those who incurred divine wrath, the text of the play is certainly not so written as to suggest any kind of human or humane identification with their victims. The non-Christian Jews are consistently and melodramatically portrayed as dominated by pride, greed, and dishonesty. Only Judas shows capacity for remorse. The others are mere stereotypes out of conventional anti-

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Semitic propaganda. Deems Taylor, who saw the play in 1922, said of its author Daisenberger: "Conceiving the Pharisees as simple villains, he wrote in long conspiracy scenes for them in which they plot against Jesus with a frank and naive scoundrelism such as exists only in the movies." The best and most effective acting, he found, was done by those "who portray the secular and wicked characters." In a prefatory prayer quoted in the 1950 official text, the actors at Oberammergau consider it a sign not of their kinship with the Jews but of their devotion to Christ that they are willing to be costumed in "the garb of those who have betrayed him from the beginning."

RARELY has the anti-Semitism of the Oberammergau passion play been discussed. In fact, the sentimentality which surrounds its performance has usually discouraged any serious treatment of its modern implications. An American rabbi, however, Joseph Krauskopf, who saw it performed in 1900, was deeply disturbed by the lesson it taught. Planning to give one lecture on the play's implication, he found himself writing three. These three, when delivered, aroused such interest that the series was extended to six, published in pamphlet form, and then with supplementary material, in 1901, as a book, *A Rabbi's Impressions of the Oberammergau Passion Play*. Rabbi Krauskopf dealt thoroughly both with the play itself and with its New Testament basis.

Such serious critical treatment is uncommon outside Germany. There it has been criticized, especially since the war, for the inadequacies of its Christianity. But ever since 1850, when increasing numbers of tourists began to go to Oberammergau, the play has been a favorite subject for sentimental treatment in the illustrated press. Decade after decade appear articles with titles like "Biblical Characters Live Again in Oberammergau," and with texts which go over the same ground almost verbatim. They describe how the men and boys, months before the production, let their hair and beards grow long, of the spritual requirements set for those who would play the parts of Christ and Mary, and of the intense excitement and sometimes bitter disappointment when announcement of parts is made. There are many anecdotes of the naive literalness with which the play is taken. In an interview Anton Lang, Jr., remarked, "Judas is a rather unfortunate man, just because he has to play that part. Many people refuse to stay under the same roof with him. In former years they even tried to do him physical harm after the play."

In the Oberammergau productions Judas has always been very much the stereotyped Jew in appearance, dark-visaged with "poison-yellow garb" and money bag. Those who play Jesus and Mary are usually conspicuously Nordic types.

In alluding to the kind of incidents Anton Lang spoke of, the preface to the 1950 text makes its only reference to the Jews: "Sometimes in earlier times and at other places, it has happened that spectators were stirred to take sides against Judas or the Jews; that, surely was to misunderstand the very meaning and essence of such Passion Plays. For they are not a mere representation on the stage of historical happenings, however much these may be necessary to the play and the faith behind it; the performance of the play is meant to awaken awareness of the evil within us and to point us the only way to overcome it." But by its identification of evil with the conspiracy of the Jews, the play leaves very unclear what the way of overcoming this evil may be. Since the central action does not begin until the entry into Jerusalem, and since Christ's speeches are very limited in number, the emphasis is on his sufferings and silences before his mockers, accusers, and crucifiers. Against these the resentment of the audience steadily grows.

Popular histories of the play tell how, at the time of the Thirty Years' War, a terrible plague ravaged Bavaria. Oberammergau tried to protect itself by enforcing a strict quarantine. One Caspar Schuchler, how-

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ever, who had been working in a neighboring plague-stricken village, stole secretly back over a mountain to see his wife and children. He brought the disease with him, and in thirty-three days eighty-four of the villagers died. The survivors vowed to God that if they were spared, they and their descendants would perform a passion play every ten years.* Why they made this particular vow is not explained. Once the vow was taken, according to the story, all those ill of the plague in Oberammergau recovered, and no one else contracted it.

The first play subsequent to the vow was performed in 1634. Oberammergau was distinctive only in the matter of the vow and the decennial recurrence, for passion plays were performed at that time in more than sixty places in Bavaria. In the 18th century, however, they fell into disfavor with the authorities because, a clerical historian tells us, "of the coarseness of the lower classes. . . . The serious scene of Christ's suffering, in spite of all fervor and good intention, fell too often into the laughable and comical, through ignorance; on the other side appeared whole troops of Jews and devil-faced buffoons, who sent the spectators into fits of laughter through their disgusting wantonness and rough behavior." Even in Oberammergau Judas's intestines were torn out and eaten by demons. Since the demons were impersonated by children and since the intestines, or what looked like them were sausages and pastries, the scene was performed with great spirit.

Finally, toward the end of the 18th century, partly as a result of what one Oberammergau priest called "the cold breath of the Enlightenment," the Bavarian passion plays were all forbidden by the secular authorities. Oberammergau, however, was not a peasant village, but a trading and manufacturing town which had known periods of great prosperity. Its play was not a crude or simple one, but the work of a succession of well educated priests. After repeated pleas to the electoral and then royal courts of Bavaria, Oberammergau, which had powerful friends, was given the unique right to continue the passion play. From 1811 on, it built increasingly large theaters to accommodate the crowds which its carefully fostered international fame attracted.

THE successive official handbooks on the play, put out by the municipality, are chiefly sensitive to the charge that the Oberammergauers are devoted to their passion play because of the huge sums which it brings to the town, that they charge outrageous prices to those who come to see it, and that it is dominated by the spirit of modern commercialism. This, too, is ironic, for the play begins with the scene of Christ's driving the money changers and merchants out of the temple. These men, whose profits are threatened, become some of the chief movers in the plot against him.

In his first speech in the play Jesus declares: "What do I see here? Is this the house of God? Or is it a market place? Shall the strangers who come from the land of the Gentiles to adore God, offer their devotions among this crowd of usurers? And ye Priests, Guardians of the Sanctuary! Ye look upon this abomination and suffer it. Woe unto ye! He who searches the heart knows wherefore ye tolerate this sacrilege."

The priest in Oberammergau, Joseph Schroeder, wrote in 1900, "Of late years Oberammergau has often been reproached with speculating. It is cetainly true that all food is dear, but it is not dearer than other places at a festival, even where there are fewer strangers." Fifty years later the handbook for 1950 included a highly defensive article by Dr. Eugen Roth, called "For God or Gain," which answered some of the complaints about Oberammergau's commercialism. Tickets, for instance, can be bought only by those who also buy in advance bed and meal coupons for a three-day stay in Oberammergau

* For over three centuries, with very few interruptions, the play has been given at the beginning of every decade. Because of the First World War the 1920 production was postponed until 1922. There was a production in 1930, and again in 1934 to celebrate the tercentenary of the vow, but none, of course, in 1940.

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from the evening before the performance until the second morning after it. This, the handbook explains, "permits them to see the Passion Play with the necessary relaxation of mind and body." The income from the play was something over three million marks in 1934. After the individual players were paid, part of the surplus was used to build an outdoor municipal swimming pool, the largest and best in Bavaria.

In the *Christian Century* for December 4, 1946, Willard A. Heaps, who had been living for several months in Oberammergau, published an article about the town's materialism and Nazism. He wrote that Oberammergau was "openly called *das sündige Dorf*," the sinful village, by non-residents who resented the commercialism which had grown up about the play and resented also the unfriendliness of the town to refugees from other parts of Germany. Mr. Heaps dealt mostly, however, with the people's ardent Nazism. Sixty per cent of the townspeople, he said, were active Nazis, many of them party members since 1933, a far higher proportion than in most parts of Germany. Of the cast of the 1934 production, to which Hitler made a gala visit at the last performance, 151 were members, including those who took the parts of Christ and the Virgin Mary. Of the ten leading actors, only the man who impersonated Judas, Hans Zwink, failed to become a party member. In fact he was resolutely anti-Nazi, and remained aloof throughout the war. This is interesting, since the role of Judas is the only one which has any psychological depth. During the war, against the side of a mountain near Oberammergau, a Messerschmitt plant was built for the development of jet-propelled aircraft. Here Oberammergauers worked along with 500 Hungarian slave laborers. The plant, like the village, was never bombed.

At the end of his article Mr. Heaps writes: "One may well ask, What is the explanation for this prevalence of National Socialist support in a traditionally devout and Catholic village?" Why, he wonders, was it so easy for the people of Oberammergau to forget that they stood "as a world wide symbol of Christianity."

His conclusion is simply that they were Germans first and Christians afterward. What he fails to take into account is the nature of the play itself, and the extent to which years of preoccupation with a play describing the malice and guilt of the Jews would predispose them to embrace a movement of which virulent anti-Semitism was so essential an ingredient.

In 1900 the Oberammergau priest Joseph Schroeder admitted that the play's emphasis was open to criticism, even from a Christian point of view. "The whole picture represents the buyers and sellers to the end of the drama as the propelling power; and its blind hate is the immediate motive for the whole Passion of our Lord. It certainly deviates a little from Bible history for the cause of the Passion lies as before mentioned in very different causes." The drama critic Montrose J. Moses, who translated the play in 1909, wrote in his introduction, "Probably one might detect in the Passion Play a determined unification of events for the purpose of accentuating the designs of the Jews —a motivation outside of the Bible intent. . . ."

In the Oberammergau version, the request of the Jews that the body of Jesus be taken down from the cross before sunset is made less a matter of respect for the holy days than a vengeful hatred which will not be quieted even by the death of the enemy. At the very foot of the cross, with Jesus dead above him, Caiaphas the High Priest says, "I cannot rest until I have seen that his bones are broken and his body thrown into the pit of the malefactors." The other High Priest, Annas, chimes in, "It would delight mine eyes to see his body torn by wild beasts." The discovery that Joseph of Arimathea is to receive the body makes them furious. A Jew called Rabbi cries out, "The traitor to the Synagogue! He has deceived us again!"

Pilate, on the other hand, as is true in many medieval passion plays, appears a

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weak but sympathetic figure who despises the Jewish leaders and admires Christ. "I will have naught to do," he says, "with the machinations of the Jews, but instead shall exert every means to save Him." When he asks a colleague what the motives of the Jewish priests are, the other answers "that envy and jealousy alone have driven them to do this. The consuming hate tells in their words and in the very expression of their faces." Pilate says of Christ: "He possesses so many lofty qualities—in His features, in His bearing, and His speech is such evidence of His lofty frankness and high talents that, to me, He seems much more than a wise Man. Perhaps too wise indeed for these evil men to tolerate the light of His wisdom."

When Pilate reluctantly agrees to the execution, he carefully states in his judgment that it is because of the "importunate clamors of the High Priests, the Sanhedrin, and the whole Jewish people." In the preceding mob scene "all the people" had shouted, "Pilate must consent—the whole nation demands it of him! We demand the blood of our enemy. The Nazarene must die! No part shall he have with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!"

Though there is scriptural basis for the scenes in which Pilate figures, they are not credible historically. Philo and Josephus describe Pilate as a cruel and arrogant ruler who constantly and unnecessarily offended Jewish religious sensibilities and ruthlessly put down disturbances. Crucifixion was the Roman mode of execution; it was carried out by Roman soldiers, and the title placed above Jesus' head, against the objection of the Jews, shows the nature of the Roman charge.

It is inconceivable that Pilate should have yielded to Jewish pressure, as in the scriptural account, or that he should have compromised the authority of Roman justice by exculpating himself before despised colonials in a handwashing ceremony which as ritual was Jewish, not Roman. "A Roman procurator" writes Plummer in *An Exegetical Commentary on St. Matthew,* "would not confess to a Jewish mob that out of fear for them he was putting an innocent man to death." Nor would the Jews have cried out, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." This alleged cry expresses the anti-Judaism of later Christians who regarded the Jewish War of 66–70 C.E. as punishment for the death of Jesus. In *The Gospel According to St. Matthew,* F. W. Green says of this assumption of guilt, "It reflects the intense anti-Semitism of the Christians of his [Matthew's] day." Finally, the Jewish people were anything but united at the time of the death of Jesus. Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, and Zealots were in profound disagreement. Many looked upon the High Priests as appeasers, collaborators with the Romans.

The New Testament was written in Greek, long after the events, and for a predominantly Gentile church. According to most Protestant church historians, the descriptions of the judgment and execution of Jesus increasingly reflect the hostile break with Judaism which followed a period of sharp polemic exchange. Jewish writers of Christian scripture often use the word "Jews" in a way which makes clear that they feel quite separate from those whom the word designates. Some of the apparent additions to the text of Matthew reveal, W. K. Lowther Clarke says, "the desire, so strong in early Christian literature, to exonerate Pilate and the Romans and to put the whole blame on the Jews." Maurice Goguel, in his book, *The Birth of Christianity,* says that "The idea cannot be altogether ruled out that, out of the growing tendency of the tradition to exculpate the Romans from any responsibility for the death of Jesus emerged that anti-Semitism which after 70 became an explicit and pronounced feature of the church's tradition. Furthermore, we cannot help but think that it was prompted by the desire to lessen one of the difficulties which faced the preaching of the gospel in the Roman world. There seems to have been a close connection between Christian anti-Semitism and the distinctly loyal attitude

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toward Rome of the first generation of Hellenistic Christians."

The preservation of this attitude, however, in Christian scripture has been taken as warrant, through nearly two millennia, for a series of abominable outrages against the people among whom Christianity rose and to whose religious teachings it owes so much. These persecutions reached their incredible climax under the Nazis, who were, of course, also anti-Christian. As a consequence, the Roman Catholic Church has very carefully re-examined its relationship to Judaism. This has resulted not only in a number of Papal statements, but also in significant changes in the ritual accompanying the prayer for the Jews in the Good Friday services.

In the Daisenberger text of the Passion Play, as it continues to be performed at Oberammergau, the anti-Semitic passages in the scriptural accounts of the crucifixion are dramatized in a most intense and unqualified way. In a number of respects, as the critics I have quoted agree, it distorts the scriptural narratives. On the other hand, the earlier events in Christ's ministry, and all the divine, the transcendental and eschatological elements in Christianity—as well as Christian doctrines of repentance, of love and rebirth—receive very inadequate representation. Except for the brief appearance in glory of Christ at the end, a hero who has "conquered the might of the foe," this is a very human drama, a drama of historic plots and betrayals, with heroes and villains clearly separated. The villains are the anti-Christian Jews, a despicable and guilty people who have wantonly incurred God's wrath. Put on as a profitable, spectacular, and tradition-rich entertainment for tourists, the passion play at Oberammergau is an offense against both history and religion. Inevitably it seems to invoke the sufferings of Christ to justify and explain very un-Christian doctrines which the people of Oberammergau enthusiastically accepted in the Hitler epoch, doctrines which helped cause the sufferings of so many millions of people, and which now are beginning boldly to be proclaimed again in many parts of the Western world.

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SIDNEY HOOK

Modern Knowledge & the Idea of God

■ Many years ago in a discussion with Jacques Maritain he remarked that anyone who was as keenly interested in arguments for the existence of God as I seemed to be was not beyond hope of redemption. One can with equal justification observe that strong concern with the validity of the arguments for God's existence threatens the integrity of belief in him. Some believers have become agnostic when they discovered that the chain of argument which was the anchor of their faith had defective links.

I owe it to the reader to indicate that the point of view from which I shall develop my position is that of a still unredeemed, "skeptical God-seeker." I call myself a "God-seeker" because I am willing to go a long way, to the very ends of reason itself, to track down every last semblance of evidence or argument which promises fulfillment of the quest. I call myself a "skeptical God-seeker" because I have so far returned from previous expeditions empty-handed. Since I am prepared to undertake the quest anew, I have not embraced any of the final negations of traditional disbelief which would forever close off further objective inquiry by metaphysical fiat.

This freedom from question-begging commitment is all the more appropriate because I am primarily concerned with "the concept of God" and only secondarily concerned with the question whether that of which we form or have the concept exists. It is of the utmost importance that we abide by this distinction. Who would dispute for long about whether "snow men" exist or whether a "hippogriff" exists without first defining or indicating in a rough way what the meaning of these terms is? Such definitions or concepts do not have to be very precise, but they cannot be so vague that we are unable to distinguish them from definitions and concepts of quite different terms altogether. The least we must know is what we are to count as "snow man" or "hippogriff" before looking for it.

Although this initial demand for clarity is regarded as legitimate in the analysis of most concepts, there is an extraordinary resistance to following the same procedure in connection with the term "God." Many people will heatedly discuss the question whether God exists—without displaying any concern over the fact that they are encompassing the most heterogeneous notions in the use they make of the word "God." After such discussions, one is tempted to say, "God only knows what 'God' means."

Now this expression "God only knows what 'God' means" is perfectly good theology, for it can be taken as a way of saying that "Only God has complete or perfect knowledge of God." Unfortunately, however, not only "complete or perfect knowledge" of the meaning of God is denied us

SIDNEY HOOK's works include *From Marx to Hegel, Common Sense and the Fifth Amendment,* and, most recently, *Political Power and Personal Freedom.* This article was originally presented (but in a different form) as the Nineteenth Free Garvin Lecture at the Church of Our Father, Unitarian, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, December 18, 1959.

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by some theologians, but even *adequate* knowledge. According to these theologians, the concept of God refers to something "unique," and therefore it is impossible to describe him in terms which are applicable to other things. Otherwise God would merely be another item in the catalogue of common things. But he is *sui generis*. Father Copleston, the able Jesuit philosopher, puts the point explicitly: "God by hypothesis is unique; and it is quite impossible to describe Him adequately by using concepts which normally apply to ordinary objects of experience. If it were possible, He would not be God . . . this must be so, owing to the finitude of the human intellect. . . ."

Now I believe it can be shown that this conclusion is false. The finitude of the human intellect is no bar to adequate knowledge of other things, even of things which are not finite; for example, we can give an adequate account of an infinite series of integers. Nor can our inability to describe God adequately flow from the presumed uniqueness of God because there are unique things in the world which we can describe adequately in terms that apply to other things. If there was a first man in the world, then by definition he is or was certainly unique. There couldn't be two first men. Nevertheless, we have a rather adequate understanding of what it would mean for anything to be the first man.

WHAT must be intended by Father Copleston and those who share his views is that God is uniquely unique. In order to understand why God is considered uniquely unique, we must recognize the second of the difficulties that are said to be involved in getting an adequate knowledge of God. This is that the concept of God refers to something or someone that *necessarily* exists. What does it mean to say that something necessarily exists? It means that our knowledge of its existence cannot be the conclusion of an empirical or inductive argument, for such can only lead to a probability judgment. Nor can our knowledge be the conclusion of a formal deductive argument—unless the premises are taken as absolutely or necessarily true, which is never the case even with propositions in geometry. The only test which is at all plausible of the necessary truth of an assertion concerning the existence of anything is that the denial of this assertion is self-contradictory. There are enormous difficulties here, the upshot of which is that at most and at best the only assertions which fulfill this requirement are the laws of logic. Everything else which is given or discovered in the world can be otherwise. Now if the laws of logic are taken as formal conditions of discourse they cannot establish the existence of anything (including God) as necessary. If they are taken as statements about things then they produce an embarrassing richness of necessary existences. Those who accepted them would be under the intellectual compulsion of finding a way to distinguish between God and other necessary existences. This makes it impossible for believers to use the laws of logic alone, for since they generally assume that the existence of other things *depends* upon God, they cannot accept any method of argument which leads to the conclusion that there are other necessary existences as well. Such a conclusion would entail that God's power is limited. If, for example, we assert that the world necessarily exists, it would be self-contradictory to bring in God as its necessary creator or sustainer.

It should now be clear why those who talk about the concept of God, especially in traditional terms, have such difficulties, and why their arguments keep breaking down. In intellectual fairness we must recognize that they have embarked upon a project of belief which forces them to use the language of paradox and analogy. What exacerbates their difficulty is that the language of paradox and analogy cannot be the same as the ordinary models of paradoxical or analogical discourse. To do justice to the theologians, imagination must give wings to our understanding and broaden the perspective of our vision. But we must also remain within the horizon of intelligibility or of what makes sense.

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If the term "God" has meaning, we must be able to say what it is. If we say what God is, we must be able to describe him in certain distinct combinations of words and sentences, and therefore we must find some principle which controls our statements. No one who regards the term God as meaningful will admit the propriety of *any* statement about God, but at the very least he must recognize *degrees* of appropriateness with respect to language. And the problem with which we are wrestling breaks out all over again when we ask: what principle determines the *appropriateness* of the language? For example, the reflective believer in God knows that the epithet "person" or "father" cannot be literally applied to God, that God isn't a person like other persons or a father like other fathers. Nonetheless he finds no difficulty in praying to "Our Father in Heaven." He would, however, deem it singularly inappropriate for anyone to refer to God in prayer as "Our Nephew in Heaven." Why?

The most plausible answer, based upon a study of the names of God and the attributes predicated of him, suggests that the principle which controls the appropriateness of our utterances is derived from the language of human ideals, in their anthropological and ethical dimensions. The conclusion is incontestable that in some sense every intellectual construction of man will reflect his nature. Nor does this fact necessarily entail subjectivity. For even science (which next to mathematics is most frequently taken as a paradigm of objectivity) can be considered a human enterprise whose propositions are constructions of, or inferences from, the data of ordinary experience, and describable in language either continuous with ordinary language or constructed from terms which are ultimately so derived, no matter how technical. But the great difference between God as an object of religious belief, and the objects of scientific belief, is that assertions about the latter are controlled by familiar rules of discourse, understood by all other investigators, that they are related by logical steps to certain experimental consequences, and that these consequences can be described in such a way that we know roughly what counts as evidence for or against the truth of the assertions in question. Now this is not the case with respect to those statements which affirm the existence of God. Certain observable phenomena will sometimes be cited as evidence *for* the truth of the assertion, but it will not be shown how this evidence follows from God's existence; nor will there ever be any indication of what would constitute evidence *against* its truth.

This is what militates against the so-called experimental arguments for the existence of God, as distinguished from the traditional or rationalistic arguments. It must be acknowledged that there is wisdom in the refusal of the traditional position (except for certain aspects of the argument from design) to *risk* the belief in God's existence on any experimental findings. For if it is the case that God's existence is to be inferred from, or confirmed by, the *presence* of certain experimental findings, then the absence of these findings must be taken insofar forth as evidence against the hypothesis. But in fact those who talk about experimental evidence for the existence of God are obviously prepared to believe in him no matter what the evidence discloses. It is considered blasphemous in many quarters to put God to any kind of test. Truth or falsity as we use the terms in ordinary discourse about matters of fact or as synonyms for warranted or unwarranted assertions in science are not really intended to apply in the same way to religious assertions.

This brings us back to a consideration of the principle which controls the *appropriateness of our utterances* about God. The most fruitful hypothesis about this principle seems to me to have been formulated by Ludwig Feuerbach, that greatly neglected figure of the 19th century, who declared after a study of the predicates attributed to God that they were projections of human needs—not the needs of the understanding but the needs of the heart, not of the hu-

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man mind but of human feeling: emotions, hopes, and longings. What Feuerbach is saying, as I interpret him, is that the principle which controls the appropriateness of our utterances about God is man's idealized conception of himself, and that the predicates of God, particularly those which make him an object of reverence, worship, and aspiration are objectifications of man's highest ethical ideals.

What I propose to do briefly is to show that certain modern conceptions of knowledge tend to confirm the Feuerbachian hypothesis both negatively and positively. Negatively, I wish to indicate some reasons why the idea of a transcendent God and the idea of an immanent God are intellectually unacceptable, i.e., they cannot give an intelligible account of the concept of God, and *a fortiori,* of his existence. Positively, I shall try to suggest the way in which the concept of God has functioned as a moral ideal without supernaturalism.

II

The idea of God as a transcendent power, independent of the world of nature and man, is perhaps the oldest of the concepts of a divine and supreme Being. Certainly it is the most traditional in the West. It views God as a Creator but in such a way as to make an inexplicable mystery of creation. In this connection, it should be pointed out that the argument from the first cause, even if it were valid, which it obviously is not, would by itself be insufficient to establish the existence of God as a Creator. Aristotle's God is a first cause, too, and is introduced as a support, so to speak, for Aristotle's physics—an Unmoved Mover toward which everything aspires. But Aristotle's God does not create the world which exists with him from eternity. It was none other than Aquinas who taught that on grounds of reason alone we could not tell whether the world had existed from eternity or had been created by God: only revelation or faith could be the source of our knowledge that God created the world. Aquinas, however, also assumed that although the truths of revelation are not the same as the truths of reason, the two must nevertheless be logically compatible. Yet the concept of a creative God has always been a stone of stumbling to the human mind—and with good cause.

"Creation" ordinarily presupposes three things: (a) a plan or purpose; (b) a method and instrument of execution; and (c) an antecedently existing subject matter or material which is reshaped or reworked by the instrument in the light of the design or plan. When we speak of God as "creating" the world, there is no difficulty with the notion of plan or purpose. But there is a grave difficulty with the notions of the instrument and subject matter. For God is supposed to have created the world out of nothing—*ex nihilo.* Now in our experience nothing is or can be created out of nothing. There is always some subject matter, some instrument. How, then, is creation *ex nihilo* to be understood? The common reply is that God creates "analogically" not literally. But analogical creation is like analogical fatherhood. It doesn't explain why one kind of analogical expression is used rather than another. Why can't we say that God coexists with the world—"coexists analogically," of course? The reason, Feuerbach would say, is not to be found in God but in man. He worships in idealized form the fulfillment of conscious or unconscious need, especially his needs as a person threatened in a world of impersonal things. He expresses this in the analogical transfiguration of the concept Creator and in its analogical predication of God.

Does modern knowledge in any way help to explain the notion of a "creative God" or *creatio ex nihilo.* Some have thought that this concept of a creative God can be clarified by suggestions from modern cosmology and modern depth psychology. I should like to say a word about each.

According to the so-called cosmology of "continuous creation" developed by Fred Hoyle, Herman Bondi, and others, new matter is continuously being generated out of nothing and in this way the universe (which

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is continuously expanding) remains "in a steady-state and at an over-all constant density." As Hoyle puts it, "Matter simply appears—it is created. At one time the various atoms composing the material do not exist *and at a later time they do.*"* What is true now is presumably true for original matter—for the very first speck of matter that ever appeared. But it should be pointed out that this theory says nothing about the *process* by which matter comes into existence. The expression "appearing suddenly" is certainly not synonymous with "creating." One can speak of "life" spontaneously "appearing" or "emerging" in the past or present without implying that it was "created" or that it is necessarily beyond scientific explanation. Matter is "found" to appear at certain times and under certain conditions. That it is "created" is something to be established only after the expression "creation" is given some determinate meaning. But without reference to plan or purpose, act or instrument, the term "creation" is a misnomer. At any rate, whatever the chaotic state of affairs which is described by the new cosmology as having existed in the universe about five billion years ago when matter was born, it came into being at time *t,* and therefore *in principle* is open to a scientific explanation in terms of the state of affairs at time, *t-1*. If it is objected that there was no time before matter came into existence and that therefore *t-1* is ruled out, then the objection equally applies to any creative act as well. Hoyle, too, speaks of time *before* and after matter appears. Creation becomes just as mysterious in the new cosmology as in the old theology.

It is a far cry from scientific cosmology to depth psychology. I must content myself with only a passing reference to a recent effort by Professor William Poteat (in *Mind,* July 1959) to elucidate the expression "creation out of nothing." He admits that any aspect or piece of behavior of the human body—physical, biological, psychological—can be explained in terms of events which precede it of the same logical order, and that these events constitute a theoretically infinite series without any first term. But, he says, when we speak of the human body or being as a "person," when we add to the language of impersonal behavior the personal pronouns "I" and "my," something radically discontinuous with the rest of the nonpersonal world comes into the picture. The world which is "mine" is altogether different from a world in which "mine" refers to nothing. Now the act of suicide is an act of radical destruction which destroys at one stroke the possibility of any kind of personal experience. "I am not destroying something or other *in* the world (by my act of suicide), I am destroying the world as a whole." This is the exact opposite of the process of radical creation. God creates the world out of nothing in an analogously opposite way to our making nothing out of the existing or created world. Granted, then, that "creation out of nothing" is a queer sort of thing, inexplicable in terms of ordinary language. So is suicide. A similar analysis of the notion "I was born" —a phrase I may use when I become aware of the world as related to myself, a person at whose center is the personal pronoun "I" —reveals that this notion is no less queer than suicide. In one case "I make nothing out of something"; in the other "I make something out of nothing." Both escape explanation by ordinary and scientific modes of speech: both provide the analogy for God as "maker of heaven and earth."

All this seems to me more ingenious than persuasive. The psychological phenomena of suicide and "becoming aware" can be given quite different explanations which make them less mysterious than "creation out of nothing." About the causes, motives, conditions, and consequences of suicide we know quite a little. Suicide phenomenologically blots out the world—but so does sleep

* My italics. I am drawing here on the illuminating account of my colleague's exposition and criticism, Milton Munitz, *Space, Time and Creation* (1957). Cf. also for analysis of the concept of creation, the chapter on "The Metaphysics of the Instrument," in my *The Metaphysics of Pragmatism* (1927).

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and unconsciousness. A man may commit suicide not because he wants to destroy the world but because others have destroyed it for him. And since a man who firmly believes in immortality can commit suicide, Professor Poteat's analysis must be revised. "Becoming aware" or "being born" to myself as a first person singular does not so much create a world as light up an antecedently existing one. I undergo the experience of being-in-the-world, of being treated as object or person, long before I become aware of the world as distinct from myself or of myself as counterposed to the world. The discovery of myself is not primary to everything else in the way in which creation out of nothing must be.

These makeshift attempts to demystify the mystery of *creatio ex nihilo* either call our attention to something which is unusual in speech or action but which is otherwise intelligible, or generate mysteries as dark as the one they would illumine. The concept of a transcendent God who creates the world *ex nihilo,* in time or out of time, can no more be clearly thought than the concept of the last number in a series in which every number has a successor. There is a sort of brutal honesty in Karl Barth's contention that God is "altogether Other" from man and the world, and that philosophic reason is unable to grasp what is "ineffable," "unfathomable," and "inconceivable."

What Barth does not understand, however, is that in applying the axe to human reason, he destroys the possibility of any solid ground for Faith or Revelation. If the concept of God defies adequate grasp by human reason, then what can it mean to say that belief in him rests on Faith or Revelation? Men thirst to know what they have faith in "as the hart pants for water." Man's reason will not be denied, despite the pronouncements of Luther and Barth. It makes sense to say, "My belief that X is my friend is based on faith, not evidence or reason," but only because I know what the phrases "X is a friend" and "X is *my* friend" mean. Similarly the statement "Belief in God's existence is based on faith, not rational evidence or argument" takes on meaning only if I am able to describe what it is I have faith in. But how can anyone who eschews intelligence or reason know or describe what he has faith in? How can he distinguish between the assertion, "I have faith in God" and the assertion "I have faith in Mumbo Jumbo"? Whether we approach divinity by reason or by faith, we cannot escape wrestling with the concept of God, even if we are unsure thereby to win Jacob's blessing.

If the foregoing analysis is sound, then the idea of a transcendent God has certain root logical and linguistic difficulties which are not likely to be affected by the progress of modern knowledge—unless the latter leads to a shift in the basic categories of our understanding. If the concept of a transcendent God is incomprehensible, it is difficult to see what difference it makes whether we declare that he created the earth in six days or six million years, whether he created man in one operation out of dust or through a long series of evolutionary changes. At the Darwin Centennial celebration at the University of Chicago last year, Sir Julian Huxley denied that the earth and its inhabitants were created, and he presented anew the evidence for believing that both evolved out of earlier forms. To which Father J. Franklin Ewing, professor of anthropology at Fordham University, replied in somewhat the same way as other distinguished theologians replied to Huxley's grandfather: "God is the creator of man—body and soul. Whether he used the method of evolution for the preparation of the human body or created it from unorganized matter is not of primary importance. In either case he is the Creator. . . . God created not only all beings but also all potentialities for evolution."

In short, no matter what the findings of science are, they cannot affect the truths of religion. And it is significant that in his address to the Vatican Academy of Sciences on November 22, 1951, Pope Pius XII without any embarrassment accepted the

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findings of modern astronomy about the age and evolution of the universe. This withdrawal in advance from any possible conflict with the claims of science to true knowledge of the physical universe makes it difficult to understand the intense warfare waged by religion and theology against science in the past. If it really is the case that the domains of scientific inquiry and religious belief do not touch at any point, and therefore cannot conflict, then it becomes hard to explain why the advance of science should in fact have weakened religious belief and produced periodic crises of faith. Whatever the present situation may be, science was not in the past given such autonomy either by religion or theology.

Feuerbach's interpretation of these periodic crises of belief is that they are nodal points in human consciousness when men become dimly aware that their statements about God are not the same kind of thing as their statements about ordinary matters, but are expressions of need and hope for an absolutely secure source, a power or an Ideal, beyond Nature, yet not foreign to human nature, on which to rely for protection against all the evils that beset them in their precarious careers on earth. "The Creation, like the idea of a personal God in general, is not a scientific, but a personal matter," he writes, "not an object of the free intelligence but of the feelings. . . ." If God is awesome and tremendous and mysterious it is because he has unlimited power over nature—and therefore unlimited Will which is related to human will. God defies rational analysis because his "existence" is postulated not by any imperative of thought but by the anguished feelings of finite, suffering man, who wishes to preserve his "personality or subjectivity" against the forces which reduce him to the level of matter. For him "the belief in God is nothing but the belief in human dignity . . . and the true principle of creation the self-affirmation of subjectivity in distinction from Nature." Religion must find a form in which the dignity of men cannot be destroyed by discoveries about Nature whose creatures men are.

III

So far I have been discussing the concept of a transcendent God and the insuperable intellectual difficulties attached to it—difficulties experienced by reflective religious individuals (among whom even Wittgenstein is to be numbered, according to Professor Malcolm's memoir on him). The concept of an immanent God is much easier to understand, particularly since it contains no reference to personality. In the history of Western religious thought there has always been among the orthodox a deep suspicion of concepts of an immanent God, which are often regarded as sophisticated expressions of religious unbelief masquerading in the language of piety. We may take the God of Spinoza and Hegel as examples. Novalis once referred to Spinoza as a God-intoxicated man, but in his own time Spinoza was denounced as an atheist, for his God was neither the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, nor the God of Maimonides or Aquinas. Spinoza's God is Substance or Structure conceived as a self-sufficient network of timeless logical relations. This God is one to whom man cannot pray, and who cannot be loved as one loves a father or friend. So too with Hegel's God. Hegel gladdened the hearts of the pietists when he declared that "the world cannot exist without God," but he brought down an excommunicatory wrath on his head when he added: "God cannot exist without the world." Hegel's God is the God of Spinoza, except that Substance has been replaced by a timeless process, a dynamic system of evolving logical relations which constitute a great Self. In its strict form the concept of an immanent God (which must not be confused with the idea of an Incarnate God) leads to pantheism, but almost all believers in an immanent God have shrunk from this consequence. They have been reluctant to see Divinity in everything because the feeling of cosmic piety, or what Einstein calls "cosmic religious feeling," cannot be sustained for very long against a close-up view of each and every item in the world: there is too much that is

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ugly, disordered, and painful. Consequently some selection must be made. God may be *in* the world, but even to a believer in immanence not everything in the world is equally divine, or even divine at all.

Two features of experience have been most commonly identified with God. The first is Reason or Order or the pattern of rationality in things without which, it has been said (by Einstein, among others), the success of human thought in charting the ways of things would be a matter of luck or miracle. Not surprisingly, the scientists who hold to this conviction invariably turn out to be the most religious of men. The God of the scientist is not the God of the prophet, priest, or moralist. "His religious feeling takes the form of rapturous amazement at the harmony of natural law which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that, compared with it, all the systematic thinking and acting of human beings is an utterly insignificant reflection" (*The World As I See It*). Helmholtz, however, was amazed that the eye should be so defective an organ of vision, while Heisenberg and Bohr are not prepared to give the universe high marks for the order of rationality found in nuclear behavior.

Some thinkers, however, find their God not in the rationality of the natural order but in its thrust of creativity. A merely rational world to them seems dead—not the ever fresh and blooming world of our experience with its surprises and novelties. Bergson's identification of God with the principle of *élan vital,* Whitehead's identification of God with "the principle of concretion" are strong cases in point. In Whitehead's philosophy, God is introduced to account for the fact that not all eternal objects are found in actuality or experience. Out of the realm of infinite possibilities of what might logically be, we must find some principle of limitation to account for the fact that this possibility comes into being and not that, that this "process of actual occasions" is realized here and now and not then and there. Whitehead admits that no logical reason can be adduced for the given-ness, the facticity, the just-so-ness of things. His God is the polar opposite of Einstein's. "God is the ultimate limitation, and his existence is the ultimate irrationality. For no reason can be given for just that limitation which stands in His nature to impose" (*Science and the Modern World*). And lest there is any doubt that he is speaking of an immanent God, he adds in his *Process and Reality:* "In this aspect, He (God) is not *before* all creation but *with* all creation."

An IMMANENT God cannot be plausibly conceived as a personal God, and it is not surprising that so many immanentists wage a fierce polemic against the conception of God as a transcendent person. The boundaries between the natural and supernatural tend to be blurred by this immanentism, and a certain irresolution and ambiguity is introduced into traditional religious faith. For a genuine religious function to be served, it is not sufficient to identify God with logical structure or process or any other generic feature of existence. What must be shown is that the world or cosmos, in virtue of the principle of Incarnate Divinity, has an objective purpose or plan which in some way explains or justifies human suffering. Max Weber, the renowned German sociologist of religion, somewhere says that the various religions of the world can be considered different hypotheses which seek to make sense of the facts of human suffering. Evil, natural and human, must in the religious perspective appear meaningful and, in some fashion, acceptable. That is why in order to warrant the appellation of "God" or "Divinity," in order to be distinguished from a merely natural force or a purely logical pattern, the immanent Principle must be thought of as working itself out in nature, society, and history in such a way that evil loses its sting. As a rule, the evil of the part is represented as necessary to the good of the whole; God, as it were, uses the Devil for His own purposes.

With respect to the problem of evil, the immanence of God is manifestly superior as a conception to the transcendent God. A

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transcendent God, no matter how analogically conceived, must be endowed with will or intent. Since his power is such that he can intervene in the order of nature (a small feat to one who is the author of nature), anyone who feels himself an innocent suffering victim of the order of nature is psychologically hopeful that by prayer or petition or sacrifice, he can influence the Divine Will or Intent. But if the all-powerful Divine Will refuses to prevent unjust suffering, he becomes to some extent responsible for that suffering—all the more so since he is also omniscient and cannot like the Epicurean God plead business elsewhere. The agony of the problem of evil consists in not understanding how an all-powerful all-loving Father can permit his innocent children to be tortured in a world he has created. And although every honest theologian must in the end declare that the existence of evil is a Divine Mystery, the agony is not therewith dispelled. It may be attenuated by a temporary mood, but it keeps breaking through in every human being who has sensed in his own life and on his own skin something like the afflictions of Job.

One cannot in the same way question, blame, or complain to an immanent God. If "evil" is represented as a *necessary* element in the cosmic order, one may have difficulty in *comprehending* its necessity, but the premise itself commits one to the belief that it could not be otherwise, and that if we persisted and were keen enough, we would finally understand why it couldn't be otherwise. Consequently the alleged mystery of evil finally dissolves in the blinding vision of its necessity. The psychological ground for this is obvious: for example, we can resign ourselves without defiance or resentment to the weather because we assume that no one controls it. When the weather becomes controllable, the weatherman will have hard questions to answer.

Although the concept of an immanent God does not carry in its train such a cluster of theoretical difficulties as the idea of a transcendent God, its practical availability for the most religious purposes, especially in the Western tradition, is highly limited. Its own theoretical difficulties are grave enough, and its moral consequences are confusing. To interpret the natural cosmos as a moral cosmos is in effect to identify physics with ethics, and the laws of nature with the laws and judgments of morality. This tends to paralyze the nerve of morality, sometimes by identifying the actual with the ideal, the "what is" with the "what should be," and sometimes by suggesting that human judgments of better or worse are altogether irrelevant to the course of affairs—both the course of nature and of history. The pattern of Divinity is to be understood without laughter and without tears, unmoved and immovable by the petty concerns of our petty lives.

IV

There is another, modern, view of God which is intermediate between the transcendent and immanent conceptions, and perhaps ultimately unclassifiable in terms of the customary distinction—the idea that God is identical with mystical experience itself. The element of transcendence in this view is that it sees God as beyond ordinary temporal experience—he can only be reached by a *break* in the natural jointures and continuities of things. The element of immanence is that once the breakthrough has been achieved, the experience itself is defined as a manifestation of Divinity. Thus Professor Walter Stace, who is the most gifted expositor of this conception, writes: "Just as Nirvana simply *is* the supreme experience of the Buddhist saint, so God simply *is* the supreme experience of the Christian mystic." And "the mystic experience of the Christian, as well as of the Hindus, is itself identical with God." This experience can be described only in paradoxical terms. It is the experience of "an undifferentiated unity," of the merging of self and non-self, object and subject, an eloquent stillness, a rapturous peace, an awesome joy. No language can be adequate to it, not even the language of oxymoron.

But three important questions must be

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asked. First, is this a genuine experience in the sense that if one has not been seized or blessed by it oneself, one can still find good reasons for believing that others have? Second, if this experience *is* genuine, is it only a psychological event in a particular individual's biography or does it testify to a cosmological or ontological fact? Third, do any ethical consequences for human life follow from the fact of the experience and/or its variant interpretations?

Because of exigencies of space I must content myself with apparently dogmatic answers, but I believe they can be rationally grounded. On the first question: there is little reason to doubt that this experience occurs and that the descriptions of it are authentic. Personally I think that the experience is quite widespread and that anyone suffering an intense emotion in extreme situations may undergo it. It is felt in moments of great danger, great love, great beauty, great joy—and, I am prepared to believe, even at the height of raging hate and the depths of total despair. The nearest I myself have come to it is when getting an anaesthetic, just before going under, and once when I almost drowned. The answer to the second question is that no experience can itself be conclusive evidence for the truth of an assertion about matters independent of that experience. An overwhelming conviction that an oasis which we see on top of a sand dune will be there when we reach it may be the result of a mirage. Even if several people report seeing the oasis, we are still not justified in assuming its existence, for they may all be common victims of the heat and thirst. The testimony of one man who had followed certain canons and methods of scientific inquiry would count far more, even if we grant that it would not be conclusive. Not everyone has experienced seasickness. Yet it is an authentic experience. But not all the unanimous testimony of the seasick can prove that the terrible vision of a nauseated reality experienced at the time gives an *objective* glimpse of those dread abysses of being by which, according to the existentialists, all of us, seasick or not, are surrounded. As for the third question, whatever consequences for human life follow from the mystic vision must be justified, if they are valid, by their observable effects on ordinary human experience. Whether an actual angel speaks to me in my beatific vision or whether I only dreamed he spoke, the *truth* of what he says can only be tested in the same way as I test what my neighbor says to me. For even my neighbor may claim to be a messenger of the Lord.

V

This brings me to the third main conception of God, according to which God is neither a supernatural power nor a principle of immanent structure, but a symbolic term for our most inclusive moral ideals. The "divine" refers to that dimension in human life which is not reducible *merely* to the physical, the social, and the psychological, although it emerges from and affects them. It is a dimension which is experienced whenever ideal ends, justice, compassion for all suffering creatures, dedication to truth, integrity, move men to change the world and themselves. This is the humanist conception of God. It is what Feuerbach's God becomes when men grow aware of the mechanisms of transference and projection by which their needs create the objects of ideal allegiance.

The humanist conception of God, which is suggested by John Dewey's phrase, "the effective union of the ideal and actual," is fundamentally opposed to any notion of a supernatural power as the *source* of human morality or even as the *justification* of morality, although it admits that belief in such a power can serve as a *support* of human morality. This entire problem of the relation between religion and morality, between God and the Good, is extremely complex. The history of the traditional religions of transcendence reveals a profound ambiguity in the way God is conceived to be related to the Good—an ambiguity on which I have dwelt elsewhere, and here briefly mention.

On the one hand, God appears in the traditional religions as the source and inspirer

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of the moral ideals which separate men from beasts of prey. He is the lawgiver from whom Moses received the tablets at Sinai; the fountain of righteousness from which the Prophets drank; the infinite sea of mercy and love which Jesus invoked to dissolve human sinfulness. Religion so conceived is the shield of morality—so much so that any doubt or disbelief powerful enough to pierce it strikes down at the same time any possibility of a good life or a good society.

On the other hand, since God is by definition altogether different from man, he cannot be bound by man's understanding nor his ways judged by human ideas of justice. It is an act of impiety to apply to God and his works the same standards which men apply to each other, even if these standards are derived from him. It would be monstrous on the part of a man to punish an innocent child for a misdeed committed by its grandfather. But when the Lord proclaims, I shall visit the sins of the fathers upon the heads of the children unto the third and fourth generation, the pious man must murmur with a full and loving heart, "Thy will be done."

Social Christianity (like prophetic Judaism before it) is a conspicuous illustration of the first strain of thought—the idea of God as the source of ethical ideals. It leads to a withering away of strictly theological issues, tends to define the religious man not in terms of belief but in terms of action or good works, and interprets the religious consciousness as "a participation in the ideal values of the social consciousness." It is, therefore, always suspect of Pelagianism.

The second strain—which stresses the impiety of applying human standards to God—is exemplified in existentialist theology whose roots go back to Paul, Augustine, Pascal, and Calvin, but which has put forth its finest modern flower in Kierkegaard. In his remarkable commentary on the Abraham-Isaac story in the essay *Fear and Trembling*, Kierkegaard praises Abraham as the most pious of men, greater in his religious heroism than all the tragic figures of history because Abraham was prepared to carry out his absolute duty to God—a duty which as a merely finite creature he could not possibly understand but one which cut sharply across his ethical responsibilities as father, citizen, and compassionate human being. Kierkegaard calls this "the teleological suspension of the ethical," which means that in serving God, one is beyond all considerations of good and evil. One "acts by virtue of the absurd." In the strongest contrast between the ethical and the religious mode of feeling and conduct which has ever been drawn, Kierkegaard says that Abraham must be regarded either as a "murderer" (the term is his) from the ethical standpoint, or a "true believer" from the standpoint of absolute religion. The truly pious man is prepared to accept any command whatever as a test of his faith.

THE position of the religious humanist, whether that of Ludwig Feuerbach or John Dewey, reverses this appraisal in a most dramatic way. Its principle might be called "the ethical suspension of the theological." Religious humanism analyzes the parable of Abraham and Isaac quite differently in order to show that a new moral insight was born when Abraham identified the voice which bade him stay his hand as the voice of God. Thus the parable illustrates the Feuerbachian contention that men create and worship Gods in their own moral image and confirms the Kantian principle of the autonomy of moral reason with respect to traditional conceptions of religion and God.

Feuerbach's insight is sometimes recognized by existentialist theologians, but they then compromise it by bringing in some obscure—and irrelevant—metaphysical or ontological conception. For example, Paul Tillich interprets religion as an expression of man's ultimate concern. God, therefore, can be defined as the object of man's ultimate concern. This means that there are as many Gods as there are objects of ultimate concern, and their existence can be established not in the way we establish the existence of atoms or stars or genes or anything else outside our consciousness but only in the way we determine what a man's overriding

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concern may be. So we say, "He is a worshipper of Mammon" or Venus, or Minerva, or Mars, or Apollo, depending upon whether a man makes a fetish of money, love, knowledge, war, or art. Tillich thus reduces the conflict of Gods to the conflict of moral ideals. This is good as far as it goes, especially because it contains a suggestion of moral pluralism and religious polytheism, and because it is coupled with the explicit denial of God's existence as a supernatural power. Indeed, in this respect Tillich seems to go even further than avowed atheists. Literally construed, he is saying that it is simply meaningless, a confusion of dimensions (or what Ryle calls a category mistake), to affirm that God is an entity among, but greater than, other entities. Such extremism, in my opinion, would make almost all the historical religions irreligious and many forms of irreligion profoundly religious. Moreover, since all human beings are passionately concerned about something—unless they are already half-dead—we must call them all "religious." Because the objects of their ultimate concern are what they are, many people are characterized as "Godless," in accordance with proper English usage. Why, then, give the term "God" to their object of concern, and convert "erring souls" by arbitrary definition? This is not the only difficulty. Matters become even more obscure when God is also identified by Tillich as "the Unconditioned," as "beyond finitude and infinity," as "the ground of Being," as "Being-itself" which "includes both rest and becoming." These terms, as I have shown elsewhere,* defy logical analysis and require some kind of Feuerbachian resolution to become intelligible.

VI

I wish to conclude with a few observations about the humanist conception of God. The great problem which Humanism as a religion must face is not so much the validity of its conception of God but how to justify its use of the term "God." The defense can be made briefly. All large terms in human discourse are historically variable in meaning or actually ambiguous in use: "atom," "substance," "experience," "reason," "love," even "man"—all show this variation in meaning. Each term stands for a family of meanings (like the term "game" in Wittgenstein's analysis) which resemble one another but are nevertheless not completely consonant. Consequently, it is argued that if the same penumbral complex of attitudes (intellectual humility, piety, reverence, wonder, awe, and concern) are manifest in a use of the term "God" which designates no thing or person but our highest ethical commitment, no legitimate objection can be raised—providing, of course, we make it clear that the new use or meaning is different from the old.

The criticism can be made just as briefly. The new use always invites confusion with the old use, and there is, after all, such a thing as the ethics of words. By taking over the word "God" as the religious humanists do, the waters of thought, feeling, and faith are muddied, the issues blurred, the "word" itself becomes the object of interest and not what it signifies. When Margaret in her simple faith asks Faust whether he believes in God, Faust replies with a kind of pantheistic, pre-Whiteheadian doubletalk about luck, heart, love, and God, call it what you will!

Ich habe keinen Namen
Dafür! Gefühl ist alles;
Name ist Schall und Rauch
Umnebelnd Himmelsglut.

To which Margaret makes reply:

Das ist alles recht schön und gut;
Ungefähr sagt das der Pfarrer auch;
Nur mit ein bischen andern Worten.

This may be called a paradigm case of religious misunderstanding.

Is, then, the religion of Humanism justified in using the term "God" for its conception of the moral enterprise? John Dewey answered the question affirmatively. I answer it negatively. Each one of my readers must answer it for himself.

* See my "The Quest for Being," *Journal of Philosophy,* November 19, 1953.

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PAUL GOODMAN

The Calling of American Youth

■ Let us exaggerate. Conceive that the man-made environment is now *out* of human scale. Business, government, and real property have closed up *all* the space there is. There is *no* behavior unregulated by the firm or the police. Unless the entire economic machine is operating, it is impossible to produce and buy bread. Public speech quite disregards human facts. The university has become merely a training ground for technicians and applied anthropologists for the monopolies and the state. Sexuality is divorced from manly independence and achievement. The FBI has a file card of all the lies and truths about everybody. And so forth. If we sum up these imagined conditions, there would arise a formidable question: is it possible, being a human being, to exist? Is it possible, having a human nature, to grow up? There would be a kind of metaphysical crisis.

Or put it another way. These conditions are absurd, they don't make sense. And yet millions, who to all appearances are human beings, behave as though they were the normal course of things. For instance, we encourage economic lunacy by watching TV; we gossip about the new cars, though they will make our cities unlivable; we answer impertinent questions of investigators about our friends; we attend conventions, listen to public spokesmen, and smile a lot and shake hands. A man is put into doubt about his own sanity. Do they have the right of it, that there is nothing absurd? Then what kind of animal is oneself? Automatically one begins to use their words and think their thoughts, although one *knows* that they are absurd. One feels depersonalized.

It then becomes necessary to stop short and make a choice: Either/Or. Either one drifts with their absurd system of ideas, believing that this is the human community. Or one dissents totally from their system of ideas and stands as a lonely human being. (But luckily one notices that others are in the same crisis and making the same choice.)

The picture is an exaggeration. In reality the American system is not inhuman but human-all-too-human. The tone of dependency, for instance, is not servile but, like the diet of hamburgers and malted milk, a regression to childhood. The Americans can make fun of themselves. The top managers and the president are not calculating monsters, but narrow and wilful human beings. Sympathy with suffering and the feeling for social justice are quite genuine in our country. Our temper is empirical and experimental. Although the official spokesmen and the mass media present an impenetrable front, the speakers are confused persons and quickly betray it under personal questioning. For all the foolishness we are bombarded with, Americans are not stupid; we have a saving sense, just like

PAUL GOODMAN'S most recent book is the novel *The Empire City;* his work on city planning, *Communitas* (written in collaboration with Percival Goodman), will soon be reissued as a paperback by Random House. The present essay is the second in a series, of which the third and last will appear in next month's COMMENTARY.

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other people. And there are carelessly swept corners full of Long-Haired Professors, Beat Generations, Winos, and other assorted fry who are officially conceded to exist. This does not add up to a metaphysical crisis. It is not even hard to see the economic and psychological causes of many of the existing absurdities and to think up expedients. But the difficulties *are* arduous; to persist as a man *does* require unusual moral character, intellect, or animal spirits.

For many young people, however, the difficulties of growing up have been so great that they do think they are faced with the critical choice: Either/Or. They have this picture of themselves and of the world. And then unfortunately, whichever way they choose tends to create in fact the very metaphysical crisis that they have imagined. If they choose to conform to the organized system, reaping its rewards, they do so with a crash, working at it, marrying it, raising their standard of living, and feeling cynical about what they are doing. If they choose totally to dissent, they don't work at changing the institutions as radical youth used to, but they stop washing their faces, take to drugs, and become punch-drunk or slap-happy. Either way they lose the objective changeable world. They have early resigned.

WHEN these disaffected find one another and form a sub-culture, they tend to see their choice, fraught with crisis, as a *religious* movement. One of the favorite spokesmen of the Beat Generation announces:

> "For the crucifix I speak out, for the Star of Israel I speak out, for the divinest man who ever lived who was a person (Bach) I speak out, for the sweet Mohammed I speak out, for Buddha I speak out, for Lao-tse and Chuang-tse I speak out, for D. T. Suzuki I speak out."

This is typical public speaking; like an address by Eisenhower it includes all voting creeds and betrays a similar lack of acquaintance. (The bother is that the speaker is in his late thirties and ought to know better.)

But let me at once give a similar strain of rhetoric of a seasoned public spokesman in the organized system itself. I quote from an address to the National Recreation Congress of 1957 by Dr. Paul Douglass. He is concerned with the terrifying Problem of Leisure, namely that with a shorter work week and automation many millions of adults might simply goof off and get into mischief.

> "The assimilation of leisure into the folkway tomorrow makes essential the reconstruction of the goals and values of life, the evolution of a new ethics, and the definition of an aesthetic suitable for the upreaching of taste, the deeper comprehension and enjoyment of beauty in its many forms, and a more meaningful existence."

Of course this is not serious. A "new ethics" would, presumably, be the work of an Isaiah or Ezekiel or at least Socrates. It would be convenient for us if someone's lips were touched with fire and he got himself rejected by us and swept our children in his wake. It would solve other problems than our leisure time. (The Beat Spokesman, surprisingly, seemed to be satisfied with the ethics that we have inherited.) Mr. Douglass cannot mean what he says, yet he does mean something. Under what conditions do public spokesmen use this kind of language, asking for new ethics and a meaning for existence, when there are concrete tasks glaring in the face?

The conditions are disappointment in oneself, according to a lofty ethics, and resignation about doing anything. Not early resignation, but after the profound disappointment of experience. The buoyant abstractions, spoken as if miracles were for the asking, ward off pain and uneasy conscience when one is no longer going to try to do anything practical. (The crisis will occur "tomorrow.") The tone, if not the content, fits the American style, optimistic about expedients. And the disappointment is more profound because the American promise was so bright. Achieving most of what we set out to get, it is surprising to find that it's useless and worse. For after the century of progress, the folk who are wealthy and

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pretty healthy are not only not happy nor wise, but uneasy. Their own writers hold them in contempt. Foreigners keep saying that the atom bombs were dropped for no good reason. The beautiful American classlessness is freezing into statuses. People ask for a stop to immigration.

In the modern world, we Americans are the old inhabitants. We first had political freedom, high industrial production, an economy of abundance. Naturally we are the first to be disappointed. Europeans, aping and envying us, are like children.

Disappointed and resigned, adults do not see a future for their own children, for they do not know the way themselves. Immigrants of the first generation wanted their children to make good and have careers; immigrants of the third generation just "want their children to be happy."

THIS public spokesman, then, asks for new inspiration to give us a "more meaningful existence." But other public spokesmen say that the juvenile delinquents get that way because they don't attend the churches we have. One explanation of this contradiction, of course, is that *we* are human and have new problems, but the boys are hardly human and ought to be better socialized to the appropriate institutions, which, to be sure, are useless for us. This is not serious.

What is the actual religious plight of a young man growing up in our society? Let us discuss it theologically, though I am aware that this vocabulary is at present puzzling.

If a person asks, "How am I justified? what is the meaning of my life?" he will surely find no rational answer. The bother is that the question has arisen and begun to plague him. If the *question* arises, as an important question, something is wrong; he will feel unworthy and damned, and wasted. Historically, appeal has then been had to psychological techniques of revivalism or physical techniques of sacramental magic. (Dr. Douglass's intellectual approach cannot work.)

But it is possible to avoid the imputation of being damned if the question, as that question, never gets to be asked—if the matter is mentioned, if at all, as a moment of reflection in an on-going process of life. This non-asking can happen in two ways. First, if certain life behavior is necessary, no questions are asked. (We shall return to this first alternative.) But secondly, if a man's developing needs and purposes do indeed keep meeting with real opportunities and duties, no "final" questions are asked. As Rabbi Tarfon said, "You do not need to finish the task, and neither are you free to leave it off." The opportunities need not be such as to satisfy a man and make him happy—that would be paradise; the duties must not be such that he must succeed in performing them—that would be inevitable hell; it is sufficient if there are simply possible ways for his activity and achievement, etc. The sense that life is going on, and the confidence that the world will support the next step of it, is called faith.

It is hard to grow up without faith. For then one is subject to these nagging unanswerable questions: Am I worthless? how can I prove myself? what chance is there for me? did I ever have a chance? (These will be recognized as "the questions of a juvenile delinquent to his soul.") Children, if we observe them, seem normally to be abounding in simple faith. They rush headlong and there is ground underfoot. They ask for information and are told. They cry for something and get it or are refused, but they are not disregarded. They go exploring and see something interesting. It is the evil genius of our society to blight, more or less seriously, this faith of its young as they grow up; for it does *not,* for most, continue to provide enough worthwhile opportunities and relevant duties, and soon it ceases to take them seriously as existing.

Desperately, then, people may try to fill the void of worthlessness-and-abandonment by seeking money or status, or by busywork, or by self-proving exploits, both to silence critics and to silence own doubts.

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They substitute role-playing, conforming, and belonging for the grace of meeting objective opportunity. But there is no justification in such "works," for they are not really the man's own works, nor God's providence for him. As the theologians have said, real works are the natural products of faith taking its next step. Or alternately, people may spurn the false roles that are available and try for formless mystical experiences. This seems to be the aim of the Beat Generation, which is a kind of quietism plus stimulants. Or alternately, again, where the despair of abandonment is acute, they rush fatalistically to punishment, to have it over and be received back.

Finding a new ethics or aesthetics, as Dr. Douglass asks, will not put us in a state of grace. Existence is not given meaning by importing into it a revelation from outside. The meaning is there, in more closely contacting the actual situation, the only situation that there is, whatever it is. As our situation is, closely contacting it would surely result in trouble and perhaps in terrible social conflicts, terrible opportunities and duties, during which we might learn something, and at the end of which we might know something, even a new ethics. (It is in such conflicts that new ethics are discovered.) But it is just these conflicts that we do not observe happening. Everybody talks nice. At most there is some unruliness and dumb protest, and some withdrawal.

So urging the juveniles to go to church is not serious, for *how* will the church give them faith?

DRAWING on the Bible, the early Protestants made a profoundly happy connection between justification and a man's calling or vocation in worldly society. Max Weber famously drew attention to this, in his book on the Protestant Ethic, as an explanation of the acceptance of ascetic self-righteous capitalist enterprise and the modern rationalized "specialized division of labor," which he equated with callings. I think that he missed the simple meaning of the connection and has thereby taken sociologists off on a wrong track. (Modern sociology can hardly stand much poor theology since it has so little at all.)

In the Bible, there are two kinds of prescription about callings. First, the simple proverbial wisdom, "Modestly attend to your business and you'll do all right." Second, the apocalyptic gospel advice that a man should carry on in his station in a damned world for a few years till the Second Coming, because he would be lacking in faith to make long plans. But the point of the Protestant connection was that, *in a religious community, the various occupations in fact justify by giving people the right ongoing activity.* This idea was accompanied by a whole spectrum of radical and sometimes violent programs to make the community religious, from anarchies and communities of love to puritanical theocracies. (The philosophy of the kibbutz, in our times, is quite identical; there is no need for a particular "supernatural" sanction.)

Vocation *is* the way a man recognizes himself as belonging, or appoints himself, in the community life and work. Jespersen showed us how a child takes on the languages of the peer-groups that he chooses because they are his ideals as he grows up. So his occupations. A good community has, for the most part, positions and callings that facilitate a man's activity and achievement. It is a world for him.

A man might *have* the vocation, know it, in various ways: by childhood and family traditions; through his chosen peers; by interest and aptitude; through a teacher who brings him out; by inspiration; or even by recognizing that a certain job must be done and responsibly accepting the necessity as his own, because it is his community and various jobs are equivalent to him (his real vocation is being a citizen). Sometimes the community does not offer the needed opportunity, but has to make a place for it when it is wrested by the man: this is the case of original creative persons who appoint themselves to an ideal new for the community, a vocation not provided by the community but that finally the community

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accepts. A good community tries to provide every youth with his right calling, understanding, however, that its providence is not Providence.

Vocation, therefore, is a solid means of finding one's opportunities, things worthwhile, useful, and honorable to do, and be justified by. The religious point is that in a right vocation a man can work hard, as every man sometimes wants to do; can do it boldly and "lose" himself, because his community supports him; and he can thereby miraculously satisfy the stringent demands of conscience. Such a man *is* in a state of grace. On this interpretation, the "Protestant Ethic" is correct; and when our society now turns against it, it is admitting that it has lost a saving grace.

THIS is a great loss. But even more terrible is that our society weakens the growing youth's natural conviction that there is a Creation of the Six Days, a real world rather than a system of social rules that are indeed often arbitrary. Many things conspire to weaken this conviction.

The trouble occurs, for instance, when city life turns into Urbanism, and when the use of our machines becomes submerged in the Industrial System. An aeroplane and its engines are beautiful, but consider how the ancient dream of man to fly among the stars and go through clouds and look down on the lands and seas has degenerated in its realization to the socialized and apathetic behavior of passengers who hardly look out the windows. City life is one of the great human conditions, but in Urbanism no one gives birth, or is gravely ill, or dies. Seasons are only weather, for in the super-market there is no sequence of food and flowers. We have seen how just with the maturity of the Industrial System, children cease to learn mechanical aptitudes; and just when the sciences are supreme, average people lose their feeling of causality. And all different timbres of music come from one loudspeaker (an earnest musician, therefore, resignedly composes with the tapes).

But this same socialized weakening of the sense that there is a nature of things corrupts the social nature itself. For instance, in the newspapers you will rarely read the words envy, spite, generosity, service, embarrassment, confusion, recklessness, timidity, compassion, etc.—the actual motives of life. They might occur, typically, in little items of "human interest," as if the doings of politicians and financiers happened otherwise. But the doings of financiers, etc. *do* happen otherwise, by rational accommodations in the system; there is little room for "motives" in "decision-making." The question is, what is occurring with the social animals who are, with other hats, the agents of the rational accommodations? This fascinating question used to be the great realistic subject of Balzac, Zola, Dreiser. Then suddenly it came to be treated "weirdly" by Kafka and Musil; and then not at all.

The big stories of crime and divorce are treated in stereotypes of "passions," as if people were characters in movies. But nature soon imitates art, and people imitate the stereotypes and produce further big stories.

So with the workaday occupations of people. There are standards and categories of employment, certificates, and union cards, that may have little relation to the concrete tasks and capacities required, but they do make it easier for the tabulators, and they more or less guarantee that the ones chosen to fill the Roles will not be the ones peculiarly able to do the jobs, and they will initiate nothing. The work is determined not by the nature of the job, but by the role, the status, the salary; and these are then what a man *is*. Typically, a man cannot accept a position at a lower status and salary, even though he may want that task and doesn't care about money; it would give a wrong notion of him and jeopardize his whole career.

Or again: a well-known magazine asks a man how they should refer to him, as Psychologist X., as Author X.? He naively thinks about it seriously and suggests, man of letters, for that is what he is, in the 18th-

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century meaning. But they can't buy that because the word does not exist in *Time*-style; he *cannot* be that, and neither can the old function of letters exist. But *Time*-style, alas, exists.

An organization has "high standards" if its members have diplomas and "accreditation." A piece of research is important if it is sponsored or carried out by an Institute with a Regents license. *In such cases these organizations and enterprises can get substantial tax-dodge foundation grants and perhaps public money.* But often this has no relation to reality whatever. E.g., can you imagine that a chap who at thirty-five would make a splendid leader of youth or adult recreation, experienced in life and having decided to serve in this field, could possibly have majored at twenty in Physical Education? The notion that colleges are the right sponsors for creative research is quite disastrous: it both corrupts the right function of the school, to teach, and it guarantees that the research will be incestuously staffed by academics. The cynical pork-barreling of these "projects" is a scandal; but the damage is not that the worthless make a good thing of it, but that those who have been absorbed in real nature and creative thought are the least likely to know the arts and have the connections to get any support at all. They cannot possibly be "safe"; how could they be? There *is,* of course, a real and hard question, how to find these people and give them means and encouragement? but *that* is the task, and not processing certified and affidavited applications. (In order to make good bets on the best leader and the inspired research, somebody has got to take the risk of making concrete untabulated judgments, and perhaps even using his legs. But it is the essence of the organized system to sit on its behind and take no risks, and let the tabulator do the work, and strengthen its own position by staffing itself, and *then* fostering the lie that outside of the system nothing exists.)

We are so out of touch with the real work in the field that, in America, a dean is superior to a professor and the board of trustees is superior to a faculty. The editor knows better than the author what should be in a book, and the publisher knows better than either. Naturally everything sounds alike. And top managers and generals map out the lines of basic research.

In the elementary schools, children are tested by yes-and-no and multiple-choice questions because these are convenient to tabulate; then there is complaint later that they do not know how to articulate their thoughts. Now Dr. Skinner of Harvard has invented us a machine that does away with the creative relation of pupil, teacher, and developing subject matter. It feeds the child questions "at his own pace" to teach him to add, read, write, and "other factual tasks," so that the teacher can apply himself to teaching "the refinements of education, the social aspects of learning, the philosophy of it, and advance thinking." But who, then, will watch the puzzlement on a child's face and suddenly guess what it is that he *really* doesn't understand, that has apparently nothing to do with the present problem, nor even the present subject matter? And who will notice the light in his eyes and seize the opportunity to spread glorious clarity over the whole range of knowledge, for instance the nature of succession and series, or what grammar really *is:* the moments that are worth years of ordinary teaching. I wonder how Dr. Skinner's machine would compare in efficiency with the method of Socrates in the *Meno?* Dr. Skinner proposes to organize the collection of "facts" by big-idea lectures of the type of the New School for Social Research. This appallingly fails to understand that philosophy and science occur in scrutinizing the concrete.

But the worst effect of losing the created world is that a young man no longer knows that he is a creature, and so are his friends creatures. This has three fatal consequences. He feels that the social roles are entirely learned and artificial; he cannot begin to belong and play a part just being himself and following the promptings of nature and

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ordinary human associations. Conversely, his own creaturely feelings then seem to him to be private and freakish. Instead of being a source of strength, they become a cause of guilt and of feeling worthless and excluded. Most important of all, not being a creature, with its awe and humility, he does not dare to be open to the creator spirit, to become himself on occasion a creator. If, by exception, he does create something, he is conceited about it and contemptuous of the others, as if it were his; and conversely, he is gnawed by fear that he will lose the power, as if it were something he had. A society that so discourages its young has nothing to recommend it.

NOR DOES our society foster the noble need of honor.

One striking characteristic of modern education is the unanimous disapproval of exploiting the powerful feeling of shame, the hot blush and wanting to sink into the ground out of sight. It is claimed that this injures personal dignity and either makes a child vengeful and not belonging, or breaks his spirit. Youth-workers with delinquents make a fetish of protecting self-esteem, as contrasted with the cops' "You young punk!" Yet in ancient education, e.g., in the Socratic dialogues, this very arousal of shame is a chief device; the teacher greets the hot flush as a capital sign that the youth is educable, he has noble aims. Such a youth has dignity in his very shame.

The difference seems to be that we cannot offer available opportunities of honor, we do not have them; and therefore we must protect what shreds of dignity the youth has. Since he has no future, if we make him ashamed of his past and present, he is reduced to nothing. In other ages, the community had plenty of chances of honor, and to belong to the community itself was honor. (Let me make an analogy from psychotherapy: When a patient is schizoid, you give reassurance, protect the weak ego; when he is neurotic and can take care of himself, you attack the character-resistances.)

Boys today hardly aspire to immortal honor, the honor of self-fulfilling achievement. It is highly disapproved of in the code of the organized system. Instead, they devote themselves to protecting their "personal honor" against insults; and conversely they dream of the transient notoriety which will prove that they are "somebody," which they doubt. The personal honor that they protect does not include truthfulness, honesty, public usefulness, integrity, independence, or virtues like that. A reputation for these things does not win respect, it has no publicity value; it's believed to be phony anyway, and if it's true, the person is hard to get along with. A British disaffected young man, an Angry Young Man, can make his protest by simply being a Cad, like Osborne's George Dillon; but that would not much distinguish him on this side of the sea. A *bad* reputation naturally makes people prudent in their personal dealings, but it generally doesn't do much harm in the press or on TV, even to a public official, for the plug is more important than the content of it. On the other hand, any official bad mark that gets on an IBM card, like being arrested and fingerprinted—no matter what the charge and even if he was exonerated of it—can be disastrous to a young man, for his name can thereby drop out of the system. Nobody, but nobody, may disesteem a man for something, or he may even get wished-for notoriety for something, that at the same time makes him unemployable. Just try to imagine nowadays the administrator of old-fashioned juvenile fiction who says, "Young man, I don't care what Personnel reports, you have an honest face and we'll give you a chance!" Rather, a good man will be asked to resign for the sake of Public Relations. And correspondingly, it is the case that suburban "good families" increasingly shun "bad families" that have had troubles, such as divorces, delinquency, or even death of a parent, for that makes the family untypical.

There is an organized system of reputations that is calculated statistically to minimize risk and eliminate the unsafe; likely it succeeds in this. It may make the enterprise

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as a whole *less* efficient, for it guarantees excluding the best, but be that as it may; the important thing is that there has ceased to be any relation whatever between "personal honor" and community or vocational service.

Conversely, the way in which our society does do honor to its indubitably great and serviceable men—say, Gandhi, Schweitzer, Einstein, Picasso, Buber—is a study in immunizing people against their virus; it would be a remarkable and melancholy subject for a sociologist. They are transformed into striking images and personalities and we assign to them the role of being great men. We pay respectful attention to their birthday sayings. They are the menagerie of Very Important People who exist only for ceremonial occasions and to sponsor funds and drives for enterprises in which they will have no further function.

This effectually prevents the two practical uses that we could make of them. We neither take seriously the simple, direct, and fearless souls that they invariably are, to model ourselves after them because they make more sense as human beings; nor do we have recourse to them please to help us when we have need for exceptional purity, magnanimity, profundity, or imagination, giving them a free hand on the assumption that their action is really better. Though we publicize the image, we do not behave as though we really believed that there were great men, a risky fact in the world. (E.g. Picasso is a Communist; Gandhi was a pacifist; so was Russell; Einstein sponsored the atomic bomb; Wright was arrogant and involved in sexual scandals; etc. Few great men could pass Personnel.)

Alternatively, we do not behave as if we believed that the affairs of our world were significant enough for the intervention of great men. For instance, no one would think of looking for sages to intervene in our racial troubles—that is not their "field of competence" (though we did have the sense to get some good sociology on the subject from Gunnar Myrdal). We would not officially ask a man of letters, as the British used Bernard Shaw, to criticize the penal system. When it comes to improving the high schools, we choose a well-licensed administrator, we would not try to persuade some extraordinary scholar or natural philosopher, a man who has actually learned something and therefore perhaps knows how it is done; naturally we came out with an excellent administrative report, but no ideas. John Dewey was called on, by passionately interested people, to make an impartial inquiry into the charges against Trotsky; that seems a reasonable use of a judicious and incorruptible man; but we do not much imitate it. But even when there is no doubt of the field of competence, as in beautifying our towns, we do not automatically call on the major artists of the world; for instance, we now lavishly praise Frank Lloyd Wright, but we never made any community use of him, though he longed for the chance and kept badgering the country with community projects.

But let us return to our average folk.

BALKED, not taken seriously, deprived of great objects and available opportunities, and in an atmosphere that does not encourage service, it is hard to have faith, to feel justified, to have a calling, or win honor. But what then fills the places of these? For every experience that a human being has is a whole way-of-being-in-the-world.

First, necessity gives justification. Having something that you must do, solves the problem of having something to do. Necessary behavior may or may not be honorable. To wrest subsistence is necessary and honorable. If a young man falls in love, a temporary psychosis, his entire day is under the iron rule of necessity, foolishly and honorably; he has something to do, if only to watch under a window. When the class struggle against exploitation was lively, it was something necessary and honorable to engage in. Indeed, it is a major defect of our present organized system and the economy of abundance that, without providing great goals, it has taken away some of the

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important real necessities, leaving people with nothing to do.

The void is soon filled. Behavior like going into debt on the instalment plan gives an artificial but then real necessity, something to do, paying up. This *is* the Rat Race, but I doubt that it would be run if people did not need its justifying necessity, for the commodities themselves are not that attractive. Young fellows drift into narcotics, and then find that they have something they must do all day, looking for a connection and a fix, and how to get the loot. Compulsive sex-hunting is something to do. By dividing into rival gangs, as Clausewitz pointed out long ago, it is possible to create a state of uncertainty of what the enemy is up to, that keeps you constantly on your toes. This is a condition, also, apt to raise the ante, for no matter how you have planned to stay within limits, you can never be sure that the others won't take advantage. Many of the apparently pointless repeated risks that juveniles take, where there cannot be any kick left in the exploit itself, make a little sense when we learn that there is a competition: Carlos has stolen twenty-six cars, Pedro twenty-three, and each is driven by necessity not to be worsted, especially since the others come along for the rides. But Carlos has an unfair advantage because he was sent as a punishment to a "Vocational High School" where he took auto-mechanics.

When psychologists like Lindner speak of the aimless, unconcentrated, unsequential behavior of "psychopathic personalities," I wonder whether they enough take into account that it requires a real object and an interest in it to make a good gestalt of experience and growth. To structure the behavior of long hours and weeks requires a goal that, from some point of view at least, is pretty worthwhile. Our society is *not* abounding in highly worthwhile goals available to average gifts and underprivileged attainments. Many goals that are busily and perseveringly pursued by some might reasonably seem not worth the trouble to others who have more animal spirits or plain sense. These really might have "nothing to do," and their aimless and sensation-seeking killing time might indicate nothing but chronic boredom. Yet they will be judged psychopathic personalities. But once they have hit on a necessitous and important activity like finding their dose of heroin or stealing twenty-six joy-rides (in the teeth of two arrests), they become models of purposiveness and perseverance.

Such are the justifications and callings. The honor is to protect one's "masculinity" and prove it by notoriety.

II

Given this world that seems so closed and critical to them, let us roughly describe the behavior of various kinds of disaffected young folk.

I have been showing that there is one prevailing system of ideas according to which the organized society behaves in all kinds of cases: whether the Governor of New York asks what to do with unruly boys, or universities embark on basic scientific research, or the press defends fundamental freedoms, or a slum block is rebuilt, or a man works in a factory, or social scientists think about human nature. Lever House, a Ford factory, and the Air Force academy are built in the same "functional" style, for there is apparently only one function, Public Relations.

So imagine as a model of our society: *an apparently closed room in which there is a large rat race as the dominant center of attention.* And let us consider the human relations possible in such a place. This will give us a fair survey of what disturbed youth is indeed doing: some running that race, some disqualified from running and hanging around because there is nowhere else, some balking in the race, some attacking the machine, etc.

(1) Start with those running the race. Of these, the most interesting are the middle-status Organization Men of various kinds, for they are aware that it is a rat race; their literature declares it. But they are afraid to jump off. Since they think

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it is a closed room, they think there is nowhere else to go. And *in* the room, if they jump off, they fear they will be among the disqualified, that is they will be Bums. But besides, they are afraid *of* the disqualified, to mix with them, and this keeps them running. This important point is generally overlooked, so let us explore it for a few paragraphs.

Sociologists of class structure seem to think that the values of the middle class are not only hard to achieve and maintain, which they are, but also that they are esteemed as good by the middle class themselves. This is evidently no longer true in a status-structure within a closed system, the literature is self-contemptuous. Many a junior executive would now sincerely, not romantically, praise and envy the disqualified poor: their uncompetitiveness, animality, shouting and fighting, not striving for empty rewards; but he is afraid of such things for himself because they are too disruptive of his own tightly scheduled structure. Further, the upper class and the middle class have ceased to produce any interesting culture, and the culture of the organization is phony. The underprivileged have produced at least Negro jazz; and the strongest advance-guard artists move less and less in upper- or middle-status circles, and if they do they are corrupted.

A persistent error of the sociologists has been to regard middle-class and working-class values as coordinate rival systems. Rather, they are related vertically: each is a defense against some threat of the other. There are only human values. The middle-class "values" are reaction-formations to inhibit in themselves some human values still available to simpler people. Therefore under stress of life or disillusion, such inhibitions may give way. They may give way to an ambivalent opposite, like becoming a bum; but they may also simply relax to ordinary nature and community, spontaneity, non-conformity, etc. Conversely, the working-class "values" are nothing but ignorance, resignation, and resentment of classless human values of enterprise and culture, at present available only to the middle class; and many a poor boy escapes his petty class attitudes and achieves something. In brief, it takes effort to make a middle-class obsessional, and it takes effort to make a poor boy stupid.

It is inevitable that in a closed status-structure middle-class values will become disesteemed, for they were rewarded by upward "betterment." And more philosophically, all value requires an open system allowing for surprise, novelty, and growth. A closed system cannot make itself valuable, it must become routine, and devoted merely to self-perpetuation. (When a mandarin bureaucracy is valuable it is because of the vastness of the underlying population and the absence of communication: each mandarin individually embodies the emperor.)

So the rat race is run desperately by bright fellows who do not believe in it because they are afraid to stop.

(2) Not running in the race are the Disqualified. First let us distinguish the average Corner Boys (the term is Wm. F. Whyte's, not to be confused with Wm. H. Whyte, Jr.) The underprivileged Corner Boys have strong natural advantages over the College Boys, such as more community, a less repressive animal training, and in some ways more resourcefulness. These things happily help to disqualify them from the rat race, but the question is why they do not lead to a more honorable and productive life in some other set-up. It is that they are in an apparently closed room; they are mesmerized by the symbols and culture of the rat race. They have seen their parents running it on the instalment plan and in the usual trade-union demands, and their own schooling has urged them to nothing else. So they are reduced to hanging around, getting, with luck, enough easy-going satisfaction to keep them content. Ultimately they will take factory jobs and couldn't care less, and then find themselves trapped, like their parents.

(3) Indeed, the group in society that most believes in the rat race as a source of value are the other underprivileged, the ignorant and resentful boys who form the

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delinquent gangs. In our model, we can conceive of them as running a rat race of their own, but not on the official treads. Now what is the style of their race?

A. K. Cohen has pointed out, in his *Delinquent Boys,* that the content of the delinquent sub-culture has classically been a direct counteraction to the middle-class culture from which these juveniles are excluded, and toward which they are spiteful. But here again, in recent years the likeness of the organized system and the delinquent culture has become more striking to my mind than their differences. Morally, both groups are conformist, one-upping, and cynical to protect their "masculinity," conceal their worthlessness, and denigrate the earnest boys. And they learn these things from one another. Madison Avenue and Hollywood provide the heroes for the juveniles. (A member of the Connecticut Parole Board urges this as a dandy thing.) Yet these post-Hemingway heroes have in turn been drawn from tough adolescents with *cajones* or misunderstood adolescents with wavy hair. It is hard to tell whether the jackets and hair-do's, profitable for the garment industry and the drug stores, were invented in Cherry Grove or Harlem; the flash and style is from Cherry Grove and percolates down through the good haberdashers, etc., but the ego-ideals of the homosexual designers are the young toughs. Both groups aspire to the same publicity and glamor. There have now been numerous cases of criminal delinquent acts performed to get a picture in the paper, just as a young man on Madison Avenue may work hard for a year to get two plugs on TV. The delinquents, perforce, take short cuts to glamor. Do they teach the junior executives to take short cuts or is it the other way? Intermediate between the two groups, remember, is the integral whole of politics-and-rackets staffed from the families of both groups. (Much evidence of this is given in the issue of the *Nation,* "The Shame of New York.") This is, then, a powerful defensive alliance of the organized system and the delinquents against the good boys who naively try to make something of themselves.

But in the alliance, the juvenile delinquents get the short end of the stick, for they esteem the rat race, though they do not get its rewards. Naturally, their esteem has the effect of making them still more contemptuous of their own backgrounds, and all the less able to get real satisfactions that are attainable. To put this another way: the $11 billions of teen-age junk that is bought annually in America is not bought by these boys, but the entire pressure of the organized system is to teach everybody that only these things are worthwhile, therefore these boys do not emulate their hard-working fathers, and they do steal cars. I have not heard that those who ask for a Congressional investigation of comic books have asked for a Congressional investigation of *Life* and *Esquire.*

Unless we keep in mind this context, what is the sense of the concern about the narcotics? Poor people who have neither future prospects nor lively present satisfactions will always gravitate to this kind of euphoria. A Youth Worker tells me that the "heroin, although probably physically harmless (except in overdose), prevents the full realization of the kid's powers—the people of China stagnated." Seriously, is the general concern for the realization of any of these kids' powers, or is it fear that the habit will spread to the middle class? I do not mean that the Youth Workers are not concerned for the kids, for they are.

(4) In our model, there are some who used to run the rat race but have broken down and flunked out, and fallen into the dreaded and ambivalently wished-for status of Bums. (I know a young man who works on Madison Avenue who dreams of looking for his father in the municipal dormitory.) Take as typical the Winos who lead a quiet existence in their small fraternities. It is easy, on the more blighted streets of New York, to pan-handle forty-eight cents for Thunderbird, and a man drinking sweet stuff doesn't get very hungry. Talking to Winos, one often gets the first impression of

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a wise philosophical resignation plus an informed and radical critique of society (e.g. Wobbly; it is startling to hear a twenty-five-year-old spout statistics of 1910). But soon succeeds irrational and impotent resentment, and one realizes that these men are living in a closed room.

(5) The Beat Generation, however, are more genuinely resigned. They have more or less rationally balked in the race, or have not had the heart to start it. They therefore have some perspective and available energy to get personal satisfactions and even worthwhile cultural goods. As we saw, they slip easily into the Disqualified and make something of poverty—more than the underprivileged do.

Yet the apparently closed room and the central fascination of the rat race are pervasive in Beat thinking too. They are not merely going their own way, as they claim; they also feel "out," and therefore they do not use for their own purposes many parts of standard academic culture that are available to them, so their own products are doomed to be childish and parochial. And they betray their best selves by seeking for notoriety and by cynical job attitudes. Politically, their onslaughts on the Air-Conditioned Nightmare, as Henry Miller, their John the Baptist, called it, sound very like the griping of soldiers who do not intend to mutiny. Talcott Parsons has a theory that the middle-class boy, dominated by his mother and with a weak identification with his father, is driven to prove himself by delinquent hell-raising. (This is the so-called "middle-class delinquency" that, of course, rarely gets to courts or social-agencies and is therefore not counted in the statistics.) But I rather think that it is these Beats who best illustrate Parsons' thesis: they have resigned the effort to cope with father at all, and they are pacific, artistic, and rather easygoing sexually.

(6) Some in the closed room direct more vigorous attacks against the machine itself and try to stop it. They are more reminiscent of old-fashioned radical youth who, however, were not fascinated by the model of the rat race but had other definite social ideals. If the energy and values that are available are restricted to those in the closed room, the machine is very tough. This seems to me to be the behavior and plight of the English Angry Young Men. Angry are not resigned but disappointed.

Young Americans are old hands at modern life and too sophisticated to be disappointed in their fathers or their country. But the English, of course, are seeing from the perspective of the Battle of Britain, which must have held out enormous promise. Certainly their tone is not "angry"—attacking an obstacle to destroy it or make it see sense—but waspish and bitter; and a favorite method of attack is not to demand some good but to behave like a "cad." Yet perhaps these young English can be effective, they have strong advantages. The system they are attacking is, unlike ours, very unsettled—the Empire lost, the class system weakening. They are better educated than our young men, and therefore not so ready nor able to resign their culture and history. They seem to remember what it is to act like human beings, and therefore they are surprised and indignant when people fall short. (This is the point of the exemplary caddishness.) Not least, in their oddly undemonstrative way, they seem to have more sexual security.

(7) French "existentialist" youth, on the other hand, have inherited a long recent tradition of public treachery. The spirit of the Resistance is no longer much apparent, and one is astonished at the cynical motives that seem to be taken for granted in quite standard theater like Anouilh. The tactics of youthful protest is to fraternize with the North Africans; but these are not an outcaste group like our racial minorities, but haughty and conceited enemies engaged in war. Yet the tone of protest is not social justice, as among the young in England, but disdain and self-disdain. So our model seems to fit them like a glove: *Huis-Clos, No Exit,* as their official writer put it.

But one must not judge at a distance. Self-disdain is already a very lofty motive;

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and maybe their existentialist theory of a closed crisis is a maneuver to produce a crisis. (One must not teach the inventors of modern revolution how to be revolutionary.) Genet, their philosopher of delinquency, is probably the best writer in Europe — and nothing comes from nothing.

(8) Finally, everywhere in the closed room is the spirit of the hipster, jumping, playing every role. The closed room is a very busy yet very limited world; there is no open or surprising possibility in it. If anything really happened, there would be a catastrophic explosion. The hipster wards off surprise by being ahead of every game and frantically active. Norman Mailer quotes Caroline Bird as saying, "The hipster contents himself with a magical omnipotence never disproved because never tested." This is a fairly psychotic state of mind, and the coolness of the hipster is a necessity in order not to "flip."

The hipster desperately stabs for some real experience; but, as Mailer describes him, in any orgasm there is the craving for some better orgasm beyond. This unfortunate disappointment is inevitable if one controls the orgasm, but of course the hipster cannot afford to let go since he has no faith or support, for nothing exists, he thinks, but the rat race. Love too is a rat race. So alternately cool and jumping, and raising the ante, he swings with the rat race. Naturally this fantasy of "proving" pervades every other group in the closed room, the organization men, the juvenile delinquents, the existentialists, but also the Beats, for whom it is a crippling error. On the other hand, by all providing a hipster sub-culture for one another, they do increase the boundaries of their closed world.

Our historical situation is ironical to the point of sarcasm. There is every reason why young people growing up should be baffled and confused; and the subjective response to it is that every teen-ager in a pool room is hip and knows the score like an IBM tabulator or a social scientist.

The model of the apparently closed room of the rat race is far from the old model of progress. But it is also essentially different from the model of the class struggle. Like the rat race, the class struggle had a dominant and an underprivileged group, but the class struggle was conceived as taking place in an open field of history, in which new values were continually emerging and the locus of "human value" changing: gradually "human values" would be residing in the next rising class and make it powerful against the old dominant class.

In the closed room, however, there is only one system of values, that of the rat race itself. This is shared by everybody in the room and held in contempt by everybody in the room. This does not give much motivation for a fundamental change, since there are no unambiguous motives to fight for and no uncontaminated means. It is remarkable in our society at present how rarely one hears, even delivered unctuously, the mention of some lofty purpose; one has to go to the Ethical Culture Society or the Reform rabbis. Correspondingly, the most important practical objectives astoundingly go by default, for instance disarmament. "Everybody" is for disarmament, but nobody believes anybody.

Suppose our State Department sent to Europe a thousand earnest missionaries to ask in every hamlet and on every street corner if the Americans will have unanimous and enthusiastic support if we unilaterally disarm at once, as soon as the survey is over. If the popular demand is irresistible, we then do disarm—on the assumption that no enemy can withstand the united sentiment of the world.

If such a proposal is made, the immediate response is: "Don't be naive. The Russians will at once attack them and they will give in."

The existence of the closed room of one pervasive system of cynical values is expressed by the prevalent proposition: "There is no use of a fundamental change, for the next regime will be like this one." Then it is hard to grow up.

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NORMAN STEIN

Vox Populi, Vox Goldkorn

A Story

■ The kitchen staff whispered and hissed their amazement and anger. Even the waiters were upset; the fruit cup and consommé had been cleared away practically untouched and now seventy-odd servings of prime rib, asparagus, and baked potato lay uneaten on the tables in the Adams Room. The staff had been trained, of course, to cater under solemn circumstances, even melancholy, but never to this disconsolate extent; an extent that moved the head waiter to observe to his captain, "This is the first time I've ever seen grief without liquor."

The diners at each of the dozen tables—most of them men—sat in committee-like attitudes; focusing their remarks and attention on the seemingly senior member of their party who in turn watched the solitary guest at the dais table, Commodore William Sanders, president of the Federal Network. Or, perhaps, it might have been the portrait above the Commodore's head, draped in black, that these table leaders were watching.

The portrait was of a man not yet middle-aged; his face was formed by a small oval subordinate to the greater circle of his head. His lips were thin and seemed unwillingly compressed into repose, horn-rimmed glasses rested on a round peg nose and magnified dark restless eyes behind. His hair was black, straight, and short like a snug cap, his forehead low and convoluted to accommodate its contents; in fact, his face seemed to be just that, a slight accommodation for his great head.

The Commodore rose—the dozen table chiefs released their attendants' attention, the waiters were signaled to leave, and six husky young men stationed themselves at the exits—and spoke: "Ladies and gentlemen . . . good afternoon. . . . I see that in beginning I'm somewhat at a loss. Availing myself of the most inelegant salutation. But, after all, I suppose it really doesn't matter as we all recognize each other and the urgent need for gathering together. An urgency, I'm sorry to say, it's my unpleasant task to magnify and multiply, today.

"At the outset, I'd like to anticipate any objection to what might have seemed like an overbearing . . . or heavy-handed manner on my part. In the way I arranged this affair. I beg pardon for any offense, excusing myself on the grounds of dire necessity and, frankly, to atone in some measure for my role . . . in our current difficulties.

"And, as an accessory to these difficulties . . . contrary to what I'm pleased to note as a minority dissent, I saw no other course than to insist on the security measures taken. I'm also confident that before we adjourn today even that small opposition will evaporate.

"So, to set the scene precisely . . . the press and public have been informed that this luncheon is to be a private tribute to

NORMAN STEIN made his debut in COMMENTARY with a story, "A Second Chance for Samson," which was listed in Martha Foley's collection of *Best Short Stories of 1958*.

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Martin Goldkorn. And in a sense it will be, unavoidably so. But, the privacy we seek is the kind a family seeks to discuss its own. Unfortunately, the only way we can obtain it is by a bit of subterfuge. Anyway, we have it and I hope we're wise enough to use it well.

"While I'm making apologies I should include one for this talk of mine. It'll probably be somewhat disorganized as I couldn't permit myself written preparation in view of the security preparations.

"Let me correct that. There are a few things I will read. Among his papers was a manuscript and I have a few passages from it. Incidentally, the manuscript has been destroyed and at the risk of being criticized for melodramatic staging, I will destroy these notes when we conclude.

"Well, then, to make a start. Left to my own ad lib devices one opening gambit suggested itself especially. To employ the clichéd lines from Caesar. Obviously, there were strong overtones of a Caesar about Goldkorn and burying Caesar meant to praise him. Likewise for Goldkorn. Except, that I, unlike Antony or Brutus, do not speak for myself. Rather, I hope I speak for *us,* the *industry,* our *medium.* Not to eulogize as some would have . . . or to damn as I expect most would have, but to examine. To examine . . . so as to recoup. So as to survive.

"Now, where should this investigation begin? At what point? There are so many legitimate and pertinent questions . . . questions I'd have to plead ignorance to. Where did he come from? Who really *knew* him as a man?

"I'm sorry I can't reveal a dramatic story. There's no legend I know. He didn't appear suddenly from nowhere . . . or from some infernal somewhere. The closest I can take you to his antecedents is to make a simple statement of fact. A statement that amounts to a recitation of his personnel file. It's simply that Federal, like any corporation, must raise an army of junior officers for executive details. In the hope that a few of the many, a few of the *too* many will promote the welfare of the corporation . . . and themselves. This may seem to be a strange summation to offer after working with a man for years but honestly, that's the limit of my accurate knowledge. Most everything else I know—or you might know—has an aura of press release about it.

"Actually, the best record we have is his public biography . . . which, together with these notes I have from his manuscript, suit our purposes infinitely better than personal recollections.

"His public biography opened . . . how many years ago was it? Only four. Four years ago. It seems like a lifetime. I didn't mean to pun at his expense but it does seem like an age . . . and if we appreciate the brief life of our industry, it has been an age. At that time, back in those prehistoric days, if any of you can conceive of a meeting like the one we're holding today, could you likewise conceive of inviting him? And today, an age later, we're all here because of him.

"So, we begin there, four years ago. When he began producing a sustaining local half hour. Thursday night, six-thirty. Then, in a matter of five weeks . . . network, sponsored. Sunday night, nine o'clock. Ratings indicating an audience of between fifty and sixty millions. The unparalleled success of our time and he refused to renew the following year.

"Before going any further, I want to make it clear that my relationships with my producers are very precious things to me. They're based on trust and respect. We have common goals. Creative expression, public service, and entertainment on the level prescribed by the Board. I want it understood that even our present circumstances cannot bring me to violate this trust. What I shall disclose is, rather, our common property. Goldkorn intended, from the nature of his manuscript, to leave us these papers as a monument . . . as a last will and testament. Though not so prematurely, I'm sure.

"I have a few lines here from his introduction. The work itself was entitled,

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LIGHT THE NIGHT. He commences like this,

> In the laboratory of our minds and under the microscope of reason the NIGHT is exposed as the original source, from which all things came and to which all things return, after brief revelation.

"Then, he goes on,

> . . . one can seek, against the NIGHT, the refuge of light or the asylum of love; but the former is frail and the latter rare.

"Now . . . of course you're surprised. Or perhaps, astonished is a better description. I was, too. I expected a text dealing in methods . . . in analysis. A how-to-do-it book. A kind of do-it-yourself handbook for limitless ambitions. Instead, and more importantly, we have a *why-he-did-it.*

"I could go on and read off the rest of these notes and in a very few minutes we'd have a startling insight . . . no, a shocking new perspective on the last four years. But, I think the wiser course would be for us to review these last years. A simple, straightforward recapitulation. And, at the end of each chapter . . . I'll give you a verse from Goldkorn's LIGHT THE NIGHT. I hope, I sincerely hope that in this manner we can begin to write for ourselves . . . a primer, a definitive primer for our industry. I guess the phrase is a trifle inflated, but not so much so when you realize that we have none.

"So, let's begin *our* book. Chapter one. His initial success, *Resurrection.* I mentioned its . . . metamorphosis from the no man's land of Thursday evening to the . . . pinnacle of Sunday night. From local-sustaining to network-sponsored. And its audience figures. Now, to examine the what and why of it. I mean beneath the superlatives. Simply, *Resurrection* presented each week a man or woman who'd come back to life. Come back to life in defiance of fact, in defiance of hope. Thirty-nine weeks, thirty-nine ex-corpses. People like Mrs. Justenson who was recalled by the earth falling on her coffin. There was Charles Angus, returning to life on an autopsy table.

"And . . . each and every one of them with some recollection, some impression of what exists on the other side of the vale. A stark . . . documentary style, no organ music, no lugubrious baritones yet as inspirational as. . . . Pardon me, I should try to prune the nostalgia from my . . . recollections.

"There were awards, ratings, everything . . . and he refused to renew the following year. My first thoughts were, when he came to me, either that he was insane or that he was trying to fox out of his contract. My arguments were, based on his responsibilities to the network, both legal and ethical. And the agency that staked him. His obligation in return for public acceptance.

"It was all useless. I couldn't reach him. I didn't nearly understand him . . . *then.* He insisted there was something else he had to do and he couldn't be persuaded otherwise.

"At this point, I no longer feel bound by the . . . boundaries of a confidence to which the interested parties are now indifferent. I pass this confidence on to illustrate the extent Goldkorn was involved . . . I should say, driven on. The formal end to *Resurrection* came on terms *he* suggested. He volunteered to forfeit all claim and title to the show if he didn't better his audience ratings by ten million with his *new* project after thirteen weeks. On those terms we, the agency included, made the bargain confident we were only dealing with . . . a case of cerebral swelling and that in the end we'd have the whole pie. And, frankly, with more and bigger pieces for the fewer concerned.

"Do I have to add that we lost . . . and that we didn't have to wait thirteen weeks. *Enemies of the Week* polled more than seventy-five million in its fourth week.

"But, wait. I'm getting ahead of myself.

"The *Resurrection* chapter needs closing. I should say, rather, that it requires another part. The other side of the coin. Not the one visible to us but the side Goldkorn saw. He writes about *Resurrection,*

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> RESURRECTION was conceived and executed to destroy the interview program; working on the principle that even a temporary triumph over the inevitable darkness renders all other human commentary insipid.

"And, is there the slightest doubt that it's been accomplished? Ruined, for all intents and purposes beyond repair.

"The paradox is, of course, what seemed to be a great construction for us . . . an advance, was for him premeditated destruction. Why? What purpose would it serve? To set out and deliberately wreak the act of examining personalities?

"I promise you an answer, but I can't guarantee your believing it.

"Well, to continue . . . chapter two, *Enemies of the Week.*

"Actually, I do feel kind of uneasy recounting events that barely qualify themselves for the past tense. And I have to keep reminding myself that they are incompletely known, incompletely recorded . . . and possess a nature. . . . Oh, well, I guess all I'm proving is that a self-conscious mood is everything except self-conscious.

"Getting back to *Enemies,* and how we received it. I remember particularly well the conference when the plan for *Enemies* was presented. My press chief . . . at the time, was ecstatic. Raving that it was a pure entity, unique, but at the same time a synthesis of the basic elements responsible for every other successful enterprise. It had competition! Human interest! Comedy . . . remember Mrs. Breyer? Drama . . . Hillery the dwarf. Audience participation! Celebrity panel! Prizes! Spectator sport!

"Yes, it was all there. Neatly wrapped. Gift wrapped! And yet so terribly simple. The dream format. The quintessence of formats! Three sets of disputants stated the causes and depths of their animosity and audience applause selected the ripest, most pungent hate. Then, the celebrity panel . . . and wasn't there a battle to get on that, discussed and evaluated the hate. The winning disputants were placed in the Sanctum Deplorum where they battled to their hearts' . . . and the nation's content.

"And . . . how did we see all this? How did it strike us? Dare we use a word like success? Or a piddling superlative like fabulous? No . . . no. We weren't even asked. They . . . anybody, everybody had the words. Psychiatrists called it the national medicine. The national catharsis. Crimeless Sunday nights and suicideless Mondays. I could go on and on . . . and on.

"But, what did it really mean to him? It meant all this for us but for him . . . it was,

> The ultimate test for ENEMIES OF THE WEEK was for it to eliminate all programs utilizing spontaneous human activity and present an insuperable barrier to their revival.

"May I ask if *Enemies* passed his ultimate test? But even beyond the victory he won, another destruction, there was more he wanted and more he got. For . . . as great as the success of the program was, was its effect on our concepts of programming. For example, when the younger of the Munn sisters managed to carry a concealed knife into the Sanctum, could any program follow that? And whatever did, was it worthwhile? And when Mr. Kelly and his son fought for seven and a half hours, who would've taken responsibility for restricting the program to its time limits?

"I couldn't.

"He wanted, and he got what he called *natural time boundaries.* Eventually, of course, he got the whole pot. When *Enemies* hit a hundred and eight million it was carried by all networks and independents.

"Oh . . . just a moment, I have a note here on *natural time boundaries,*

> Broadcasting should conform to and complement the natural length and rhythm of human activities.

"Ahh . . . I can see an expression of loose ends spreading over your faces. I've read to you a few mystical passages and a few that make it patently clear Goldkorn was out to break down traditional forms. And just now

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I've read a positive statement . . . that doesn't jibe with the . . . negative ones. I'm aware of the danger of overbuilding a climax but I still promise you one, a motive. Though I won't be responsible for any cases of severely strained credulity. I might say . . . herniated credulity.

"But, before that . . . I ask your indulgence while I indulge in a bit of public soul-searching.

"More so at this point than any other, you're all entitled to ask . . . with *Enemies* the absolute model of success, how did I feel? Up to my hips in gravy. Would it be possible for me to repudiate . . . the delicious taste of power and victory? Seeing *my* credits carried everywhere Sunday nights. It was . . . truthfully, better than getting an exclusive with the President. But, I can't claim any foresight, hindsight, or vision of any kind. I had to get my nose rubbed in it . . . so, today, if I were asked, Sanders, was the game worth the candle? Honestly, and this isn't just ceremonious sincerity . . . no, no it wasn't.

"Now, if I can collect the pieces of my . . . narration, I think we've arrived at a point less than a year ago. Six months would be more accurate. The scene . . . success with no end in sight. Moreover, it seemed even the future was licked . . . by merely extending the present.

"Then, he came to me again. With his special look. A soft voice with a diamond-hard determination behind it and said he was through with *Enemies*. I remembered our interview before *Resurrection* was discontinued. This time my only argument was that I didn't have the nerve. Frankly, I was afraid. I could only plead a compromise of waiting. He said it'd be his responsibility. He had something else to do and he didn't want to compete with himself.

"This interview, it lasted about a half hour, was my introduction to Goldkorn's *contest*.

"Perhaps, with some justice . . . which is hard to separate from scorn, the contest type of product promotion has been called the ad man's pet dodge. Traditionally, I believe, when nothing else presents itself a contest and prizes is *the* way out. Regardless of the ingenuity involved, it *was* a legitimate way to satisfy accounts.

"At the time, the first time I was faced with the obvious destructive nature of his act, the best I could do for my conscience was to rationalize that although he was tearing one chapter from the advertising text, he was replacing it with another. He called his contribution, *single impact*. As to the true equity of the . . . trade, I'm sure there are many of you here who could deal with this . . . last adventure of his much better than I.

"Now . . . in dealing with Goldkorn's two other . . . episodes, my procedure was to contrast a historical capsule with an illusion to his private design. But, here, the distinction becomes hazy . . . and for the first time a new element intrudes. Goldkorn himself.

"We can dismiss the prize offered . . . any one thing money could buy as setting a high standard but by no means an insurmountable one. And the contest gimmick . . . even though I feel it to be the purest single example of Goldkorn, *Guess the Name of the Sponsor?*—it does not provide much of an insight into the workings of the man's mind as does the *single impact* concept. Twelve weeks of priming . . . name, address, and guess on a postcard.

"Incidentally, we never did actually complete the tabulation but a conservative estimate would be in the neighborhood of two billion entries.

"The new element . . . intruding, that I mentioned a moment ago lies in his explanation of *single impact*. He wrote,

> The dissemination of information by repetition and saturation techniques subverts the basic strength of the medium: immediacy. Hence, the need for SINGLE IMPACT.

"This coupled with the fact that he and *only* he knew the identity of the mystery sponsor and that *only* he intended to reveal it, leaves no other conclusion except that he

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intended to dominate the entire promotion. He was ready to assume stature . . . by dispensing the final word . . . the same Goldkorn who gave them *Resurrection* . . . and took it away and gave them *Enemies of the Week* and took it away and gave them instead the brand name and the prize!

"At least, it was supposed to have been that way. It was supposed to have been,

> SINGLE IMPACT, if at worst moderately effective, will in combination with the impetus of RESURRECTION and ENEMIES OF THE WEEK generate the momentum for . . . .

"For what?

"For . . . his chef-d'oeuvre. But that, presently.

"First, we have to put the final punctuation mark on the unfinished contest chapter. His death . . . no, his murder.

"I was awake all last night trying to choose a way to approach the subject. . .or avoid it altogether as I almost did. Early this morning I decided to let things take their natural course and—here is the bridge waiting to be crossed.

"My feelings on the subject are that we, as representatives of our community, ought not avoid the subject because of the fear that we are . . . implicated. Or, that a portion of the guilt falls on us. Certainly his murder concerns us and most certainly it was committed by someone, somewhere in the industry. Because, obviously, the idea and the motive were abundantly present. One might even say . . . rampant.

"Knowing all this, however, does by no means fix or define the area in which we as a group stand.

"An easy defense might be constructed along the lines of self-defense. But, if it had to be that, a position justifying his murder to salvage our material positions, I'm not at all sure it would ease my conscience . . . or make the fruits of our material success acceptable.

"No. It can't be that. My feelings, and I cannot express them too strongly, are that the industry must be excluded as a party to the act. I feel that we must absolve it as we'd absolve a minor. As immature and . . . unable to realize the quality and nature of his acts. And, most important, of his *omissions.* We're responsible only in allowing conflicting and irreconcilable elements to go unchecked. By allowing enough . . . too much freedom, enough freedom for strife. If nothing else, I hope we understand this, today.

"WELL, now, let's see. You've been very patient with me while I've labored through this last half hour . . . and the last few years up to today . . . and chaos. By way of introducing the present allow me to preview for you a release that'll be issued tomorrow morning over my name. The gist of it is that Federal will abandon the contest and the search for the mystery sponsor. Further, we will refuse to indemnify any of the agencies purporting to represent the mystery sponsor.

"This should make my attitude toward the past . . . and the future patently clear. In a word, I earnestly suggest we set ourselves to endure. Tumult and shouting are not very durable substances.

"And . . . speaking of substances, now, for the substance of Goldkorn. I've delayed it . . . those who're charitable will say for developmental purposes and those . . . others might say to hold attention by milking suspense.

"But, the truth of the matter is that I was a bit leery of spewing it right out. I wanted it in the perspective of . . . recent events. And frankly, I was afraid that if I did . . . spew it right out, I might have been laughed off the platform. So, I thought by presenting the ideas found in his manuscript side by side with his achievements, the credibility becomes only difficult rather than impossible. And, I see I'm postponing it even longer with this preamble . . . in extemporizing my talk I couldn't take too much for granted.

"I've tried to reveal his real ends in each instance. Less than a half dozen in all. The immediate end of *Resurrection* and *Enemies*

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was to fatally undermine . . . if I may coin a phrase, the vis-à-vis-*ness* of the medium. This was both the obstacle he sought to overcome and the prize he sought to win. To make it useless for us . . . and something he could *resurrect,* later for himself.

"He attacked, not in the open, not by presenting an antithetical force . . . but by taking his objects and expanding their limits until they burst. If you'll allow a melodramatic phrase . . . he forced suicide on them.

"Alongside this, he contributed *natural time boundaries* and *single impact.* Together, his triumphs and his contributions were to provide the foundation for . . . for, I have it here,

> . . . and the NIGHT shall be lit, hushed, lulled.

"That was the very last line of LIGHT THE NIGHT. It's much like the lines I read earlier from his introduction. Mystical . . . and seemingly far afield from *Enemies* and *Resurrection* . . . and the contest. But, let me give you another sample. Less lyrically inclined but a necessary bridge to understanding the lyrical ones.

> The only achievement unanimous to all denominations of civilization is the invention and employment of *narcotics*; narcotics either ceremonial or secular, taken collectively or solitarily, whether potion or belief—no matter, they are all sipped from a *nocturnal chalice.*

"And, a little further on,

> The NIGHT—necessary chemical for fear and evil—cannot be dispelled by the narcotic torch which sheds a surrealistic light, illuminating only loneliness.

"So, I imagine the thought progression becomes clearer. Goldkorn believed and planned,

> . . . to find a place . . . beneath sight and sound, at the point of inarticulated vision and audition, there, the PRESENCE shall be created; created within NATURAL TIME BOUNDARIES.

"We're here! We've arrived in narrative . . . and let me add that with a different course of events, there's not the slightest doubt we'd be here in fact . . . about now. The *presence* would be a fact. The *presence* would be the *only* fact. Instead of persons . . . personalities, things. But, whose *presence*? The *presence* of what? Listen, I could almost dare you to,

> The WATCHMAN's light, dim, the WATCHMAN's voice, soft; shepherding dreams, suspending dreams above the depths and composing them by reason.

"There . . . there's the ideal. The transference from the diurnal to the nocturnal! With him . . . at the controls! Goldkorn alone! With a monopoly on the subliminal approach to . . . potentially the *entire* population.

"I SHOULD allow you some time to pause and digest this monstrosity of . . . conviction but now, today, in the comparative safety of the ruins Goldkorn left I actually feel that what might have been the practical effect of his designs . . . the power and such are only secondary concerns of ours, today. Of historical, of academic interest. Because, the vital problem we are confronted with is that in reviewing history we have come face to face with an ideal . . . an ideal in action. And, if there's any other editorial more appropriate today than one dealing with ideals . . . I'm in the wrong room, the wrong business . . . and the wrong century.

"Just a moment, I should substitute the word discussion for editorial. For, if any conclusions are reached . . . they must be reached by all of us here. Therefore, I would like to present a few of my observations on . . . the breeding and feeding habits of ideals. Those rare and often predatory birds.

"First off, and most obvious observation is to remark on ideals as contagious . . . substances. Mortally contagious. It lodges, I believe the medical phrase is that it finds a host who infects others. And, while those who are infected may burn with fever, only the host glows. If a pun is pardoned, that's probably why he's soon extinguished.

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"Secondly and briefly, ideals are no respecters of age or ages. They pass on most reluctantly. An ideal pertinent and vital in some past age can linger on, restricting and hampering the present.

"Lastly, the temper of an ideal is never benevolent. It can't be. No matter how generous, no matter how uplifting, no matter how humanitarian, they are all tyrants. With no tolerance for their opposites. They are . . . inescapably, abridgements of freedom.

"Now, I've purposely offered these impressions as statements distinct from the problem at hand because I feel that . . . the problem at hand is only a particular example of a general problem. In other words, even if we manage successfully to dispose of Goldkorn's remains, that does not preclude a re-occurrence in a different form. Unless we take steps. So, I've tried to underline them, as I see them, the essential characteristics . . . I should say the pernicious characteristics of an ideal in operation.

"And as a first step, as a first preventive measure, I propose that we consider, in future, meeting regularly like this. If I may digress a bit further, I suggest, for example, that a possible topic for our next such meeting would deal with my remarks on the . . . loitering of ideals past their purpose. To clarify in our minds the conflict between the cult of individuality in an era so complex . . . that sensibly, it should be dismissed on the grounds of expediency.

"Even this, urgent as it is and postponed perhaps too long, presupposes a leisure we cannot afford right now . . . because right now we are still faced with the question of what to do right now.

"In searching for a solution I think it best to first determine position . . . and ask, what have we done? And the problem is simplified by half. In the beginning, when we introduced ourselves and our medium we agreed tacitly . . . to assume a posture. That, that was almost the fatal error. We assumed a posture instead of striking one. We presented ourselves as technicians servicing the public eye. We should have scrupulously delineated this trust instead of dimly, vaguely sketching it out. If this had been done, then, we couldn't have been led so far and so dangerously close to final disaster, now.

"We should have made it explicitly understood . . . to ourselves and everyone that . . . in order to maintain our integrity, the integrity of a visual organ, we are permitted only to focus and select material. Never, never, under any circumstances to intrude the slightest trace or hint of private convictions.

"In fact, I believe and I hope the need is obvious to all, that this strict impartiality is the prime element we should try to instill in the character of men who will inherit the medium. We should insist and demand it and settle for no less . . . and I can easily prophesy now, there'll be charges of brainwashing and the like. But, every last particle of doubt and opposition can be swept away . . . if it can be imagined what Goldkorn might have achieved and gone on achieving if he hadn't been driven by his . . . *idée fixe*.

"IN SHORT, we are safe as long as we remember and believe the simple phrase which begins, *The views expressed do not reflect, etc. etc.* That's the sacrifice we must make in exchange for public trust . . . and the other fruits the service brings.

"Well, maybe, all things considered, we've been lucky. We've still got a chance to pick up the pieces. To rebuild our own confidence, the public confidence . . . everything we gave up so easily, so cheaply. And, we've got a moral, too. A moral I don't think we'll get another chance to learn.

"The moral . . . to apply a bit of Jefferson, is that the price of security is eternal vigilance. We should adopt . . . an ironic memento from Goldkorn's estate. We should become the *watchmen*! We must close ranks and watch for the man who drifts off, by himself. The man who will tantrum to have things his own way. That's the sign, he'll say it must be *his* way.

"I remember I'd see Goldkorn just walking down a hallway and he moved as though he were in a trance. Listening to a voice leading him. And, when he spoke to you it

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was like he was repeating a conversation he'd had before. As though only he had taken part in an imperative, irresistible dialogue. He . . . made you feel it.

"The logical development of these last remarks of mine . . . which I refuse to embellish . . . beyond this, is that I . . . we prided ourselves on having a finger on the public pulse but we can't deny that he was closer to the heart. Or, as he'd have it, closer to the soul. But, look at the cost! To himself . . . to the industry. I'm not *imprudent* enough . . . or *impudent* enough to venture any further along this line of thought, except to observe that he built his empire out of death, hate . . . and a gigantic circus. These few words should be sufficient for the wise.

"I guess that's it. I've told you what I think and what I feel. Perhaps not very eloquently, but the best I could manage under the circumstances. That's my share, my duty as a member of our community. Now, I'd like to open the discussion and welcome suggestions . . . even rebuttal. Any constructive idea . . . to sort out this shambles. If I've been mistaken, I'd like to know. If you agree, I'd also like to know."

There was no immediate response to the Commodore's invitation, but after a few moments he received a round of resounding applause which was raised to an even higher pitch as he burned the notes from Goldkorn's manuscript.

Before adjourning, the assembly voted unanimously, on the Commodore's motion, to announce an annual *Martin Goldkorn Award* for outstanding services for the advancement of the medium.

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LESLIE A. FIEDLER

Duplicitous Mark Twain

■ Duplicity is the most notable, perhaps the essential characteristic of the greatest American novelists; and surely the most duplicitous of all is Mark Twain, precisely because he wears the mask of straightforward simplicity. The notorious "Notice" affixed to *Huckleberry Finn* reads: "Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be persecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot." This apparently bluff warning, however, comes to us not directly from "the Author," but "Per G. G. Chief of Ordnance"; it is, that is to say, proffered as a joke, a piece of fiction. And who is "the Author," anyhow? Huckleberry Finn, who purports to tell the story which follows? "Mr. Mark Twain," who, Huck informs us in his first paragraph, told a few "stretchers" in *Tom Sawyer?* Or Samuel Langhorne Clemens, who lurks somewhere behind the Mark Twain who looks over the shoulder of Huck. If he is Huck or Mark, he is only a character speaking inside a story or a lifelong impersonation, not very different from the "Ishmael" who ironically warns us against taking Melville's account of the whale hunt as a "hideous and intolerable allegory." And if he is Samuel Clemens, who likes to boast of how he took his readers in, he can scarcely be trusted!

But who is the *persona* called Mark Twain and loved alike by lovers of literature and those who sincerely hate it? He is, first of all, a funny man, but more particularly, one who is funny at the expense of culture: an anti-literary writer, whose best books are travesties of others—of the Arabian Nights, the romances of Walter Scott, the tales of King Arthur. When he was not writing burlesques, he was mocking the piety of tourists before old masters, getting the goods on Shelley, exposing the absurdities of James Fenimore Cooper, being snide at the expense of Jane Austen, mocking the New England Brahmins in a speech which he hoped vainly they would take for a good-natured joke, or (over and over!) revealing how romantic literature had corrupted the American South! The self-distrust of the American writer, projected ambiguously in such authors as Poe and Hawthorne, he worked into an open attack on the artist as the Other. It is Twain's contempt for culture which won him quite early the kind of popular acclaim never accorded in his lifetime to an American writer of equal merit. No literate philistine could help feeling at home with his apparent espousal of experience over sensibility, truth over elegance, simplicity over sophistication, artlessness over art.

In some quarters, his pose has been hypostasized into a position, and he is spoken of as the founder of a school which descends via Dreiser to Hemingway and James Jones: an Americanist or Redskin (the term is Philip Rahv's) school opposed to the Euro-

LESLIE A. FIEDLER'S new book, *Love and Death in the American Novel,* from which this essay has been adapted, will be published this month by Criterion Press. He is also the author of the collection of essays, *An End to Innocence.*

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peanizers or Palefaces. Twain is markedly different, however, from most other writers put in the Redskin camp. Like Whitman or Dreiser or Hemingway, he deals with native materials and relatively simple people, using colloquial speech; but unlike them, he is not an open rebel, a self-declared enemy of society. His avoidance of sex, for instance, betrays the sense in which he is, however crude in his manners, basically genteel: at worst, a genteel Noble Savage, the friend of enlightened clergymen. Even his pornographic *1601* was written for the bland approval of the Congregational minister, Joseph Twichell, who enjoyed condescending to the author, in whom, for all his "coarse spots," he found the heart of a conformist.

Just once in his writing career, Twain seemed to have made an error in judgment —with the publication of *Huckleberry Finn.* He had, as was his practice, read the manuscript to his wife and sent it off for approval to his moral arbiter and friend, William Dean Howells; then had censored it to meet all their objections, as well as his own more finicky ones. Yet his book was banned by the committee of the Public Library of Concord, Massachusetts, who found it "rough, coarse, inelegant, dealing with a series of experiences not elevating. . . ." and concluded that "it is the veriest trash." Newspapers all over the country joined in the chorus of disapproval, extending their disapproval to *Tom Sawyer,* and declaring of both that "they are no better in tone than the dime novels which flood the blood-and-thunder reading population." The polite reviewers were frightened into silence, even Howells, who had applauded in private, not daring to write his usual adulatory notice; but no one, least of all Twain, was prepared to defend the book on the grounds that it was, indeed, "irreverent . . . irreligious . . . inelegant," truly "subversive." The single review of *Huckleberry Finn* to appear was published as a letter to the *Century Magazine* and insisted upon Huck's "courage" and "manliness," as well as "the total absence of morbidness in the book."

Perhaps the main function of *Tom Sawyer Abroad,* the first of two published sequels, was to try to put *Huckleberry Finn* in a favorable perspective, make it seem good, clean, quite undangerous fun; yet Twain never was wholly at ease with his greatest work. He certainly ranked it below the obviously uplifting *Joan of Arc,* and even agreed with his wife in her preference for the more vapid *The Prince and the Pauper.* To Twain, an unqualified national acceptance was as necessary to his concept of his role as failure and rejection had been to Poe. It is not merely that Twain was a successful writer, or that he was interested in making money; the essential point is that he could not abide any hint that he was not loved and trusted by the great audience which despised and distrusted other first-rate art. For him, literature was a way of arriving: the sole method of social climbing capable of winning him the approval of the moral arbiters of elegant society, without losing him the affection of the scarcely educated general public.

It is tempting to label him the philistine as artist and let it go at that—attributing his triumphs to a grace which he did nothing to deserve. Yet it is evident that he had values and standards, for all his show of artlessness, and that he distinguished among his own books between those which he wrote merely for money and those he wrote for posterity. It is, perhaps, better to think of him as the artist as philistine, as one who, half deliberately at least, assumed a disguise in which he could penetrate into the midst of a populace grown restive under the pressure to love culture. In this sense, he plays the role of the stereotypical Westerner opposing the condescension of the East, the stereotypical husband resisting the demands of a culture-hungry wife, the stereotypical American tourist rising in resentment against the guides and tour books, the steamship companies, and the vast, commercialized museum of Europe itself!

Toward the end of the 19th century, American tourism began in earnest; and

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upon the ambivalence of the New World tourist to the Old World, source of his religion and his high culture, a long line of American writers commented, beginning tentatively with Cooper, and reaching a first climax with Henry James, Henry Adams, and Mark Twain. Though Twain had begun to break through to national recognition with the reworking of a Western tall story, his real entry into literature is made with *Innocents Abroad* (1869). It is worth remarking, precisely because it is so easy to overlook, that Twain is, with the possible exception of James, the most Europe-oriented, Europe-obsessed of our late-19th-century novelists. After the *Innocents Abroad,* he turns eastward again and again, confronting the Old World in *A Tramp Abroad, The Prince and the Pauper, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, Tom Sawyer Abroad, Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, 1601, Following the Equator, The Mysterious Stranger;* and the last posthumous collection of his stray pieces is called *Europe and Elsewhere.*

Whenever, as a matter of fact, Twain dreamed of producing "literature" rather than "entertainment," like a good, genteel American of his period, he looked across the Atlantic for his subject matter and techniques, producing such stiff costume dramas, moistened with tears, as *The Prince and the Pauper* and *Joan of Arc.* The beginnings of his career as a writer Twain liked to date from the moment when a stray leaflet telling the story of Joan had blown against him in the streets of Hannibal. Yet he produced nothing of real merit out of his piety toward the European past, despite the time and energy he invested in research, writing, and revision. The other side of his ambivalence is more fruitful; and his only "Eastern" novel to approach in zest and inventiveness his great "Western," *Huckleberry Finn,* is *A Connecticut Yankee,* in which he plays the philistine as self-satisfied boor rather than the philistine as tremulous worshiper at the shrines of history. Yet even *A Connecticut Yankee* does not quite come up to the freshness and vigor of the nonfictional *The Innocents Abroad.*

Already in *The Marble Faun,* the subject matter of *The Innocents Abroad* is implicit; but it is a comic subject matter, which cannot really define itself in the Gothic ambience of Hawthorne's melodrama. Hawthorne's boredom as he tagged along behind his wife through the picture galleries of Europe, his sneaking conviction that the clean copies of the old masters made by American art students are superior to the cracked and dirty originals, reappear in Mark Twain, turned into frank and ribald jests. The comic cliché of the child-husband (staunchly American and honest) revolting against his mother-wife (Europeanizing and pretentious) is by no means the invention of Twain. As a matter of fact, he embarked on his actual first voyage to Europe without any wife at all, making do with a substitute "mother" picked up on the cruise: a Mrs. Fairbanks, to whom he read his mildly blasphemous articles, checking all questions involving "good-taste."

His blasphemy is finally no more than pseudo-blasphemy: not a denial of, but a complement to the culture-religion of the American female, another aspect of our national sexual division of labor! In the end, though, Twain was only kidding, pretending to be a more hopeless boor than he in fact was, in order to provide for himself and Mrs. Fairbanks the special American *volupté* of intersexual acculturation. Twain in *The Innocents Abroad* has assumed the role not of the rebel but the Good Bad Boy; and the clue is there all the time in his calling Mrs. Fairbanks "Mother"—in his being bad just for her!

Almost everywhere in his work, Twain writes as a boy for a world accustomed to regarding the relations of the sexes in terms of the tie that binds mother to son. Not only does he disavow physical passion, but he downgrades even the Faustian role incumbent on American authors. In him, the diabolic outcast becomes the "little devil," not only comical but cute, a child who will out-

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grow his mischief, or an imperfect adult male, who needs the "dusting off" of marriage to a good woman. Twain's typical fictional devices were contrived at a time when everywhere in the popular American novel the archetypes were being reduced to juveniles. As Clarissa becomes a small girl in *The Wide, Wide World,* so Werther becomes a child in Twain's total work, turns into the boy-author Mark Twain; and not only the American women who made Susan Warner a best-seller approve, but their husbands, too, who laughed at their wives' taste. Even dirty, tired adult Europe approves, finds no offense in *The Innocents Abroad* itself, since Twain was playing a role that European self-hatred and condescension to the United States demanded, acting the Good Bad Boy of Western culture. For everyone, male and female, European and American, he represents the id subverting tired ego-ideals, not in terror and anarchy, but in horseplay, pranks, and irreverent jests.

There is notoriously a price for assuming a mask, indeed, always a suspicion that what the mask hides is no face at all! And certainly one senses in Twain the insecurity of a man never quite sure of what he had to believe to survive: that somewhere beneath the high jinks of Twain, there was a real and quite serious Sam Clemens: with serious ideas, too dangerous to utter; and serious ambitions, too lofty to risk in the market place—even a serious vein of bawdry, too masculine and broad for the general reader. But his serious ideas eventuate in the sophomoric cynicism of "What Is Man," his serious aesthetics in the sentimental banalities of *Joan of Arc,* his serious bawdry in the pseudo-archaic smutty jokes of *1601.*

Finally, Twain is betrayed not by his contempt for culture, which is involved, ironical, and sometimes wickedly witty, but by his pretensions to culture. He was a man fitfully intelligent when he did not know he was thinking, a spottily skillful stylist when he was not aware he was writing artistically; but he lacked critical judgment completely (his notion of criticism was a hunt for boners in the Leatherstocking Tales), and was tormented by an urge toward self-parody that verged on self-punishment. He is, therefore, an embarrassment to admiring critics, who tend either to swallow whole his dishearteningly uneven achievement; or to admire him only for the bitter wisdom presumably concealed from the vulgar beneath the hilarious surfaces of his work. There are corresponding traps for dissenting critics, who may find Twain the beneficiary of a cult of native humor finally more deadly than the cult of museums which he exposed; or cry out that his "philosophy" is the product of a childish mind, and his dissembling of it for popularity's sake shameful.

To make of Twain either a cult or a case, however, is finally to lose the sense of him as a poet, the possessor of deep and special mythopoeic power, whose childhood was contemporaneous with a nation's; and who, remembering himself before the fall of puberty, remembered his country before the fall of the Civil War. The myth which Twain creates is a myth of childhood, rural, sexless, yet blessed in its natural Eden by the promise of innocent love, and troubled by the shadow of bloody death. The world in which his myth unfolds is one in which passion is less real than witchcraft, ghosts more common than adulterers; but it is also one in which a pure love between males, colored and white, triumphs over witches and ghosts and death itself. It is, of course, a world already dreamed in the fiction of Cooper and Poe, Dana and Melville, but never before labeled: "For Children Only!"

It is hard to say whether the fear of sex, a strange blindness to its manifestations, or the attenuation of sexuality itself drove the American novel back over the lintel of puberty in the declining years of the 19th century. Twain himself seems to have believed that it was the last; in *1601,* he suggests, in the guise of a joke, that genitality itself had withered to the vanishing point in America: "Then spake ye damned wyndmill, Sir Walter, of a people in ye uttermost

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parts of America that copulate not until they be five-and-thirty years of age, ye women being eight-and-twenty, and doe it then but once in seven yeares." In the mouth of "ye damned wyndmill," this is spoken contemptuously, but in his own voice, Twain makes a similar assertion about the young people of his childhood community, with a certain amount of pride: *"Chastity.* There was the utmost liberty among young people—but no young girl was ever insulted, or seduced, or even scandalously gossiped about. Such things were not even dreamed of in a society, much less spoken of and referred to as possibilities."

The dream which Twain dreamed, at any rate, did not include such possibilities; and *his* memories of the past, at least, were duly expurgated, though just once in *Tom Sawyer* his censorship relaxes. For a single moment, we see Becky caught out peeking at the dirty picture in the teacher's anatomy book, and for that moment we are reminded of the living flesh beneath the pinafores and roundabouts. But it does not finally matter; since Twain will not let his protagonists over the borderline of adolescence, playing such games with their ages that the reader cannot tell from page to page whether they are barely out of kindegarten (in *Tom Sawyer,* Tom is just losing his baby teeth) or on the verge of manhood (in *Huckleberry Finn,* one summer later, Huck, Tom's apparent coeval, is fourteen). Yet Twain's dream of boyhood begins with a dream of love in a sexless world; and, indeed, the "Boy's Manuscript," which he wrote in 1870, and which is the seed of all the later books about Huck and Tom, is an account of a love affair between eight- or nine-year-olds—involving flirtation, jealousy, and reconciliation, though not, of course, passion.

DEMOTED year by year, love in the United States comes to sit at last in the kindergarten, final refuge of innocence. Yet for all its sexual purity, Tom's childhood world is intimately acquainted with death. Violence is omnipresent, yet somehow is never considered to impugn innocence, so long as it does not involve concupiscence. The plan of Injun Joe in *Tom Sawyer* to take revenge on the Widow Douglas was apparently based on an actual case involving the threat of rape, which Twain bowdlerized to a mere slitting of the nostrils and notching of the ears—thus apparently making it suitable for child readers.

There is the sense everywhere in Twain that *violence doesn't count,* the muting of sensitivity which is always demanded by slapstick and the more brutal forms of farce; and it is this which the earliest review of *Huckleberry Finn* applauded as "a total absence of morbidness in the book," a proof that "the *mal du siècle* has not reached Arkansas." But this is scarcely the whole story; for concurrent with such acceptance of terror in Twain, is a guilt-ridden obsession with it, an inability to let it alone. Twain's attitude toward violence is finally as complicated, subtle, and deliberately ambiguous as his attitude toward sex is naive, sentimentalized, and hopelessly evasive. He is not only the creator of childhood idylls but a great poet of violence; and, indeed, his very humor depends upon a world in which there is neither a stable order nor civil peace.

His hope for order and peace he invested in the genteel Atlantic seaboard society into which he married, after years of drifting from job to job through West and East and South, looking for these qualities especially in his wife, whom he drafted as a super-ego, a living conscience. "I would . . . quit wearing socks if she thought them immoral," he said of his Livy. The society which had made him the untidy boor he always felt, he recalled as a world of violence and horror. Missouri he remembered as a slothful sub-frontier, in which the fathers no longer had any authority, and the mothers sought in vain to assert certain simple-minded standards of piety and decorum. Certainly, his own father had died in Twain's childhood, crying despairingly, "Let me die!"; while his mother, in fact, had pleaded with him at the deathbed, "Only promise me to be a better boy. Promise not to break my heart."

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Yet to Twain, Missouri was also a world of innocence and freedom and joy, a world in which *he,* at least, had been innocent and free and joyous, a naked boy, swimming and fishing and smoking on Jackson's Island. To the idyllic era of his childhood, Twain's mature mind reverted over and over, only to discover there certain nightmare images of violence: the dead man he had discovered after breaking into his father's office; the vagabond shot down in the street and gasping for breath beneath the heavy Bible laid on his chest; the hellish storm that had broken the night Injun Joe died, and had left Twain whimpering for the salvation of his soul; the tramp who had burned himself to death in the local jail, setting himself on fire (perhaps!) with matches the boy Twain had smuggled to him. Each terror brought with it the shadow of guilt: he should not have been sneaking into his father's office after dark; he should have been good enough to regard the crash of thunder with equanimity; he should have protested against laying so heavy and pious a burden on a dying man's chest; he should not have passed contraband through the bars.

Twain began to feel after a while that he carried with him the infection of death out of the world he had left into the new world in which he sought peace. The death of his father, perhaps, and certainly that of his brother Henry (whom he pilloried later as Sid all the same), he felt as somehow his responsibility; but these at least belonged to the life he had led before meeting Livy. When his son died, however, after an act of carelessness on his part, his favorite daughter, Susy, while he was absent in Europe, "died where she had spent all her life till my crimes made her a pauper and an exile"; when his daughter Jean developed epilepsy, and his wife ailed, he was more than ever ridden by a guilt which he could not allay, except by trying to persuade himself that death was a final good. "She has found," he said of Susy, "the richest gift the world can offer." Yet the books in which he tried, toward the end of his own life, to express his dark despair are flat and unconvincing or shrill and sophomoric.

His most profoundly sad books are the most mad and idyllic, his wisest those he wrote dreaming, not thinking: dreaming the golden dream that threatens momentarily to turn into nightmare: and the wisest and saddest of them all, as it is also the craziest and most euphoric, is, of course, *Huckleberry Finn.* Indeed, to turn from *Huckleberry Finn* to the rest of Twain's work is disheartening; for there are only portions of other books which approach it; most of the first part of *Life on the Mississippi,* a good deal of *Pudd'nhead Wilson;* and to a lesser degree, *The Innocents Abroad, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, Tom Sawyer.* Beyond this, there is much that is merely occasional, even trivial; much that is without passion or point; much that is highfalutin' or absurdly noble; much that is terrifyingly unfunny and empty. After a while, the reader who has made the mistake of reading too much Twain begins to feel that even the books he has liked cannot possibly be as good as he has thought them; that what Twain has left behind is not so much a real *oeuvre* as a bag of tricks.

And then one reads *Huckleberry Finn* again, hears—intermittently at least—a voice which is neither Clemens's nor Twain's but genuinely Huck's, which is to say, not the voice of a genteel sentimentalist or a clown in full make-up, but of a boy-Ishmael: "the juvenile pariah of the village . . . idle, and lawless, and vulgar, and bad. . . ." The phrase is out of *Tom Sawyer,* of course, and it is with that earlier book that any discussion of *Huckleberry Finn* must begin; for it is Tom who discovers Huck and discovering him discovers also a great mythic theme. That theme succeeds in time in overwhelming the love story of Tom and Becky, which was the first inspiration of the book, and even thrusts aside the kind of genre picture ("Whitewashing the Fence"—the illustrator's dream!) which was its second. Of Tom Blankenship, the original of Huck, Twain

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writes in *The Autobiography:* "He was the only really independent person—boy or man —in the community . . ."; and in *Tom Sawyer,* adds that all the children "wished they dared be like him." The memory of "all the boy" Twain was or dreamed himself afterward is Tom; the memory of all he was not and only wished he dared aspire to be is Huck; and it is fitting that they be companions, the books named after each, sequels.

"Mark Twain's next book will bear the title of 'Huckleberry Finn, A Sequel to Tom Sawyer,' " a puff in *The Dial* for February, 1884, announced; but Twain was unwilling to depend on advertising alone to make his point. "You don't know about me," the first sentence of the new novel reads, "without you have read a book by the name of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.* . . ." And it is well, for once, to take Twain at his word, though there intervened between the publication of the first book (in 1876) and the second eight years, nearly seven of which Twain spent bogged down and unable to write a line, once his first impetus had taken him through the fifteenth chapter of the book as it presently stands. The point was, though it took Twain seven years to find it out, that his new book had ceased to be a continuation of the old, developing a much more complex relationship to it than that of a mere sequel.

Though *Huckleberry Finn* begins in the same idyllic summer of which *Tom Sawyer* had already consumed more than the normal number of weeks, and comes to a close in the following year, both boys have grown older by perhaps five or six years. And the author, too, has matured, is only *playing* now at producing an entertainment for children. If *Tom Sawyer* was always a boy's book, even when Twain thought he was writing for adults, *Huckleberry Finn* is on one of its levels at least, not merely an adult but a subversive novel.

The language of Huck is a function of Twain's understanding of his character and role, and varies in authenticity with the author's sense of what both he and his character are doing. In all three Tom Sawyer stories, Huck is Tom's Noble Savage, a sentimentalized id-figure representing the Good Bad Boy's dream of how bully life might be without parents, clothing, or school; and in those books, Huck is more condescended to than admired. In *Huckleberry Finn,* however, Huck does the condescending toward Tom, who represents his misguided ego-ideal, the embodiment of a "literary" style which he cannot really afford. When he is truest to himself, Huck respects, in the teeth of all he has been taught, Nigger Jim, which is to say, an even more ultimate id-figure; in his weaker moments, he joins Tom in relegating the surrogate for the instinctive life to the world of make-believe, which is also a prison.

In general, the two boys represent to each other the writer's conception of "experience" and the nonreader's conception of "art." It would be pleasant to say that they fuse finally into a single figure: but in Twain, and in American life as a whole, the two are notoriously disjoined: the artist and the naïf, the man who has made it and the man who never knew it was there to be made. It is all very well to tell us that Huck's original ended as "a good citizen and greatly respected." This, we know, is not true of the fictional Huck, who is finally lost to Tom and respectability alike, though in boyhood, Mark-Tom and Tom-Huck (surely, the inversion of the names is a deliberate joke!) were permitted to play hooky together; it is clear that once Mark-Tom decides to be good, to marry Livy, he will never again answer Tom-Huck's meow. Only in fantasy will he slide down the lightning rod again; but even his fantasy will end on a note of separation, not really belied by the desperate attempts, published and unpublished, to continue beyond *Huckleberry Finn* his childhood alliance with the village pariah.

IF WE think of the two books not as sequels but as alternative versions of the same themes, those themes will reveal themselves in their mythic significance. Stripped

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of incidental ornaments, *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn* are seen as the same dream dreamed twice over, the second time as nightmare; though the terror of the second dream is already at work in the first, whose euphoria persists strangely into the second. In both books, there is a pretended, quasi-ritual death to the community and its moral codes; though in *Tom Sawyer* that "death" is a lark, undertaken in childish pique, while in *Huckleberry Finn* it is a last desperate evasion, an act of self-defense. In both, there is a consequent spying on the community from cover to watch the effects of that death, the aftermath of regret: the childish dream of the suicide, who longs to be present at his own discovery, come true. In the one case, however, the spying is a prelude to a triumphant return, in the other, to further concealment.

In both, there is an escape to an island. But in one case, the natural Eden is a boys' paradise, from which one returns as from a picnic; in the other, it is an asylum not only from "sivilization" but from pursuit, enslavement, and death; and leaving it, the refugee plunges into further flight. The good companions, in the one case, are other boys, homesick almost from the start; in the other, the sole companion is a runaway slave, whose home is nowhere. In both, there is a night journey across the river back into the abandoned world of obligations and restraints, a scouting foray into what has become enemy country; but in the one case, the scouting prepares for a return, in the other, a more desperate withdrawal.

In both, the escapee and presumed ghost watches from a place of concealment (how much in both books is peeked at, witnessed, overheard!) a sentimental Pietà, the sorrow of the "mother" over her mischievous and presumably lost boy. But how different is Huck's witnessing of Aunt Sally's tears, which are not even shed for him, from Tom's watching Aunt Polly cry. Tom is already prepared for his reconciliation with the offended mother while Huck is already incubating his great refusal. In Tom's pocket all the time is the message, *"We ain't dead—we are only off being pirates"*; while Huck is preparing inwardly for the moment when he will declare: "But I reckon I got to light out for the territory ahead of the rest, because Aunt Sally she's going to adopt me and civilize me, and I can't stand it."

In both books, there is a terrorized flight from a threatening Satanic figure, also outside of the community from which the boy-protagonist tries to escape in earnest or in play; and in each case, the outlaw figure represents a grotesque travesty of the boy himself, his innocence distorted into an image of guilt. Tom plays the robber, the pirate, which Injun Joe is in fact; Huck yearns in Widow Douglas's house for the life of ignorance and sloth, which his Pap actually lives. But in *Tom Sawyer,* the shadow of the protagonist is represented as utterly alien, a melodramatic half-breed out of a dime novel; in *Huckleberry Finn,* Huck's shadow is his own father: no creature of melodrama, but the town drunk—a vision of what he himself may well become!

In both books, the shadow figure controls or threatens a treasure which can be possessed in peace only after he has died; and in both, the plot involves a simultaneous revelation of that death and the protagonist's deliverance: his coming for the first time or again, into a fortune. In both cases, the death of the demonic guardian of the hoard is rendered with special horror: Injun Joe at the cave's stony sill, a broken case-knife in his hand and the gnawed claws of bats beside him; Pap, naked and stabbed in the back, in the floating house of death, its walls scribbled with obscenities. But only in *Huckleberry Finn* is the full Oedipal significance of their deaths revealed, the terrible secret that the innocent treasure can be won only by destroying the Bad Father!

In both books, there is a good angel, too, a redemptive *anima* figure, contrasted with the threatening shadow. In *Tom Sawyer,* that figure appears in the form of Becky Thatcher, juvenile version of the snow maiden: "a lovely little blue-eyed creature

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with yellow hair plaited in two long tails, white summer frock." She is called, Tom's "new angel," and, for all her peeping at the forbidden picture in the teacher's book, will obviously grow up to be just such a good woman as Twain himself married. Meanwhile, she scarcely knows which she admires more in the Good Bad Boy Tom, his badness ("Oh, you bad thing!"), which it will give her pleasure to subdue, or his goodness ("Tom, how *could* you be so noble!"), which she calls forth and will sustain. It is of marriage with her that Tom dreams; for, as he explains to Huck, she is a "girl" not a "gal"! But marriage, to Huck, means only domestic strife and the abandonment of the world in which he is at home. Wistfully and a little jealously, he remarks, "Only if you get married I'll be more lonesomer than ever."

Yet Huck has his good angel, too, appropriately enough as black as Becky Thatcher is white: not a future good woman but a runaway slave, who represents his aspiration toward a deeper level of the primitive, even as Becky represents Tom's yearning for a "higher" level of civilization. Miss Watson's Jim is the Becky Thatcher of *Huckleberry Finn*. They cannot be present in the same book; Jim does not appear in *Tom Sawyer;* and when he enters the sequel she withdraws, making even her brief farewell bow under the name of Bessie Thatcher. With Jim, of course, Huck does not dream of any sexual relation, any more than Tom does with Becky; nor does he think of their union in terms of a marriage. Yet they pet and sustain each other in mutual love and trust; make on their raft an anti-family of two, with neither past nor future, only a transitory, perilous present of peace and joy.

Like Tom and Becky, Huck and Jim triumph over the petty pride that threatens to separate them in the midst of horror and pursuit, declare their affection without shame or fear of ridicule in the face of death; yet, like Tom and Becky, they seem to be already drifting apart after their moment of deliverance. For Huck and Jim, there is no possibility of a continuing love; Jim has a family, which will presumably claim him, and Huck must follow the centrifugal impulse which has made and will keep him the "only independent person . . . in the community." Moreover, he and Jim are separated not by the schoolyard code which forbids the fraternizing of boys and girls, but by the profound social gulf between black and white in ante-bellum Missouri. Huck knows that the talk of another lark involving Jim, the outing to the Indian Territory, will not really materialize. The prospect of "howling adventures amongst the Injuns" is merely another of Tom's artistic lies, a forecast as vain as his assurance in the earlier book that Huck will come and live with him after he and Becky are married.

Tom and Huck had, in fact, already stood alone at the close of both *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn;* for each book tries to end with a pact in which the Good Bad Boy and the juvenile pariah come to terms: the juvenile pariah agreeing to accept an adoptive mother, and the Good Bad Boy agreeing in return to accept the pariah into his world of make-believe—the robber gang or the expedition to the territory. Both the integration into the family and the playing of terror in the place of living it stand for a surrender of independence, since Tom, who thinks he wants to be like Huck, secretly wants Huck to be like him. In *Tom Sawyer,* the melancholy happy ending works; but *Huckleberry Finn,* which begins with the collapse of that first happy ending, closes with the hint it will not hold the second time either.

All of which means, finally, that *Huckleberry Finn* is a true book, *Tom Sawyer* only "mostly a true book" with "some stretchers," one of which is its ending. Huck can tell the truth about Tom, for though he lies by preference almost always, he *knows* when he is lying; but Tom is incapable of telling the truth about Huck, because he does not ever know when he is lying. From time to time, Huck sees quite clearly what Tom is like: "So then I

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judged that all that stuff was only just one of Tom Sawyer's lies. I reckoned he believed in the A-rabs and the elephants, but as for me I think different. It had all the marks of a Sunday-school." Toward the end of this book, however, when he has *become* Tom, Huck seems to lose this insight, and submits himself to the hoax of trying to steal Jim in fiction as he has already tried in fact; but at this point the book has become Tom's, not his.

By and large, it is possible to say that *Tom Sawyer* is a fable of lost boyhood written by Tom, while *Huckleberry Finn* is that same fable transcribed by Huck. Somewhat misleadingly, Tom's version does not appear in the first-person, though Twain considered telling it that way. But its third-person narrative is finally even more right; for Tom is always an actor in a fiction of his own making. One of the chief functions of its style is to make the events it describes seem less real. The reality of the emotions it evokes is deliberately called into question by overwriting which verges on burlesque: "Life to him seemed hollow, and existence but a burden" or "He thought he loved her to distraction, he regarded his passion as adoration; and behold it was only a poor little innocent partiality." The characters described so solemnly are eight- and nine-year-old kids!

TOWARD the book as a whole, Twain adopts the same ironical tone, closing it with the words: "So endeth this chronicle. It being the history of a *boy,* it . . . could not go much further without becoming the history of a man." "So endeth this chronicle. . . ." It is at once a confession of falseness and an attempt to evade it, utterly different from the conclusion of *Huckleberry Finn:* "so there ain't nothing more to write about, and I am rotten glad of it. . . ." *Tom Sawyer* is the first of a long line of books intended to be read by a boy with his father looking over his shoulder, and thus to perpetuate for a new generation the legend of an older one. From it descends a tradition, which passes via Booth Tarkington to the creators of Henry Aldrich and the Good Bad Boys of contemporary comics: the praise of good-badness as the true Americanism.

Huckleberry Finn, however, is not the progenitor of anything, because it is written neither by Tom nor Mark Twain, but by the evoked Huckleberry himself, who makes it quite clear at the end that he intends to write no more: "and if I'd 'a' knowed what trouble it was to make a book I wouldn't 'a' tackled it, and ain't a-going to no more." Nor could Twain himself make him change his mind, though he tried to call him up over and over for an encore. Only once did Huck really possess his presumable author, speak through him in his authentic voice. In the book called by his name, Huckleberry Finn exists, dictates his own style, his own moral judgments, his own meanings, which neither Twain nor the reader has to understand to experience. Tom Sawyer notoriously enters the book before it is finished, not letting Huck speak for himself again until the very last pages; but though he can counterfeit Huck's style, he cannot make him live, only move woodenly through the howling farce—which reveals the poverty of Tom's values and imagination, and exposes the falsity of his role.

Tom Sawyer's imagination, whose compass spans only what is in Twain's everyday power, takes over at precisely the point where Huck's sense of reality can no longer function, where "life" yields to art, strategy to style. Though both are liars, Huck lies to stay alive, while Tom lies for the glory of it; the modest dream of Huck is survival, the less modest vision of Tom heroism. That is why *Tom Sawyer* is a book about glory, in which even Huck is persuaded to play ineptly a heroic role, while *Huckleberry Finn* is an account of staying alive, which Tom cannot be persuaded to take seriously. Even as the bullet enters him, crossing the border between his world of idyllic make-believe and the adult world of slaveholding reality, he is already planning to wear that bullet on a string around his neck, swagger with it down the main street of Hannibal.

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WILLIAM BARRETT

Frank Lloyd Wright's Pictorama

■ Why was Frank Lloyd Wright, who for twenty years or so had spoken with no uncertain contempt of modern painting, chosen as the architect of a building whose main function, supposedly, was to preserve and show off at their best the works of modern artists? The trustees of the Guggenheim Museum must have thought Wright was joking and did not mean what he said. This was a mistake: for so humorless and self-absorbed a genius as Wright, every word that crossed his lips had the finality of papal pronouncement. More probably it was just the old principle of star billing: for the big Spectacular you must get the biggest name even if the big star is miscast for the part. If the Spectacular turns into a fiasco, it will at least be a howling and sensational one. The new museum is spectacular and exciting in many ways, as one would expect from any large project by Wright, but in ways that make the individual works of art a subservient appendage to the architecture. Where another architect might have understood that the function of a museum is to disappear, as it were, before the works of art it houses, Wright insists on overpowering these works by his own presence. Anybody who doubts that Wright was serious in his ridicule of modern painting has only to take a trip to the new Guggenheim museum.

This trip begins with the exterior, but let us postpone that and begin with the first step inside the door, where in the first impression of the single total space from dome to floor we encounter the genius of Wright in its certainty and simplicity. The sudden rush of space is lovely and exhilarating. The spiral of the ramps, as one looks upward, is an arabesque that flows, without breaking it, into the rhythm of the whole dome. The bits of the paintings here and there visible from below behind the ramp are bright and invigorating splashes of color punctuating the white rotunda. One is not really looking, or trying to look, at the paintings *yet*. So far so good. Then one's eye detaches the works of sculpture on the ground floor. Under the space of the dome they are at first glance reduced to the indifferent and incidental objects of décor in a hotel lobby. With a start one recognizes familiar works, among them some really first-rate Brancusis that have been acquired by the museum since James Johnson Sweeney took over. Now here is a very positive yardstick for measuring this new museum, because the old Guggenheim had a Brancusi show a few years back in which some of the same pieces were exhibited. The old Guggenheim was just a nice Fifth Avenue mansion, less pretentious than most, and happily not congealed into that frigid imitation of French chateau style that litters the length of the Avenue. The main thing is that it did have *rooms*, and within these rooms individual works of art could be isolated and looked at. Brancusi was far more imposing in the old Guggenheim than in the new: the individual sculptures were let be themselves, not absorbed into some structure supposedly grander and more significant. The powerful King of Kings, for example, awesome and mysterious as Easter Island, and yet with the intimate warmth of the wooden texture that was one of Brancusi's special secrets among modern sculptors, dominated one of the rooms in the old Guggenheim, while in the new it is a piece of wood islanded forlornly in an immense lobby.

This absence of rooms, real rooms, in modern architecture is a strange denial of the human need to be isolated, alone, to shut a door. Is it the case that this architecture has accommodated itself too willingly to the spirit of the

WILLIAM BARRETT, professor of philosophy at New York University and a former editor of *Partisan Review*, is the author of *Irrational Man*, a study of existentialism.

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machine age, that it secretly thinks always in terms of factories and office buildings?

Once details have begun to detach themselves, you begin to be a little uncomfortable at some of the design in this impressive dome. The ribbing under the dome is both busy and tasteless, with meaningless triangles and horseshoe curves that obscure the simple flow of the basic line. It would have been easier and better for Wright to have followed conventional line here —the rest of the structure is original enough, God knows. But here too he must assert himself with something original, and precisely in the department where he has always been weakest: taste and décor.

Such failures of taste, however, would not matter if the pictures were truly served. So we take an elevator to the top, and now the Great Pictorama begins!

It is curious that Wright seems never to have heard, or thought about, the old folk observation that it is more tiring to descend a mountain than to climb one. Probably he was too engrossed in the brilliance of the idea of a continuous descending circular ramp that would lead past all the pictures; and it is a brilliant conception, *abstractly;* the only trouble was that it was never tested concretely, in relation to viewing paintings. To a certain extent Wright was always a genius of the abstract idea; and if he was in the grip of his own abstraction, he must assert it against life itself, including the personal life of the people who might use one of his buildings. He forbade people to have the decorations they might have liked in one of *his* houses. Never have I felt the suck of gravity quite so forcefully as on the ramp of the new Guggenheim, as it pulls you past one picture to the next. You have always to be conscious of planting your feet and holding your body at an unusual angle in order to stay put for a while before a painting. Never has terra firma been quite so welcome as when I reached the level bottom at last and was walking on the usual kind of floor. How is it that an architecture that claims to be functional could have dealt so thoughtlessly with the ordinary physiology and habits of the human body?

WHY should Wright have overlooked these matters? The explanation, I think, is in what he imagined would go on in this museum, and this is the key to the whole structure. He imagined a great crowd continuously and slowly flowing past the pictures, down and out the door into the garden or the street. A kind of conveyor belt of customers. The building is really the kind of thing proper for a World's Fair; and it is no attempt at malicious witticism, but simply the more accurate designation, to call it a Pictorama rather than a museum. This great crowd really turned out during the first couple of weeks after the opening. They had come to see the building rather than the paintings; in fact, with a crowd like that, as at most *vernissages,* the paintings couldn't very well be seen. But Wright has designed a building where people must perpetually come for the building and not the paintings.

The descending ramp would have been a splendid idea for a World's Fair that was exhibiting miniature designs of city developments of the future or model factories or perhaps new styles of automobiles. You need not look at these things very long. If you are not a technician interested in the specific technical problem, you get the general idea immediately. But a great painting, or even a good one, is something else again. It was not painted so that you can get the general idea of it as you shuffle past with the crowd. You have to stay put before it until it comes to you. Better still if you can sit.

Ah but of course there is no place to sit before a picture at the Guggenheim! In a building that bows so low to functionalism that it has a lavatory on every level there is not a sofa or bench, except in a little corner of the main floor where people cannot see very much but can wait for the telephone or for rendezvous. There is no place where you can sit down and lose yourself in contemplation of a painting. Here again, evidently, Wright thought of the museum as a building for the masses, and amid those dense crowds that he must have imagined moving along like sheep before the paintings, there would of course be children with their mothers, and so there would have to be a john immediately handy in case junior was short-taken.

Anyway, there would be no place to put chairs even if the directors should be so minded to break the continuity of Wright's conception. The edge of the near ramp would be too close, and the ramp on the other side too far. This stricture applies equally well if you are merely trying to see the paintings standing up. The

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best distance for seeing some of the paintings would be to be suspended in space one-third of the way out under the dome.

Some people I know have been much impressed by the view you get if you look across the rotunda at the paintings on the opposite wall. The effect, I admit, is very splashy. But it is also one of the most subtly dangerous effects of the building, especially if the museum is considered an institution to educate public taste. The effect of seeing paintings strung out along the wall at a distance of a hundred or more feet is to reduce the individual paintings to rather gay posters ornamental to the building. The pictures sink to a common indifferent level. A splashy but rather empty Mathieu, for example, will show up at this distance as equal to a quiet and monumental Mondrian. The museum actually has one of the best of Mondrian's middle period, "Composition No. 7, 1913," a perfectly magnificent picture. It could very well be lost in the shuffle, for the Guggenheim collection is a very uneven one, if you did not know and were not on the lookout for it. Imagine a New York boy of fourteen or fifteen who is seriously trying to educate himself in art through the museums of the city. If he has any stuff, he will of course eventually detach that painting from the gay spiral of the Pictorama. But it will take him longer, and there will be more false leads en route.

In the present boom in the buying of American painting, a very fortunate thing for the painters, the majority of purchasers are still private persons. This means that these paintings will be hung in private apartments or homes, and will be lived with the year round, day in and day out, under varying conditions of weather and lighting. (As yet, not all collectors keep their paintings uniformly and artificially illuminated.) This is quite as it should be: the test of a painting is how well it stands up when you live with it. Modern painting is different in many ways from the painting of the past, but it is still painting, and every painting lives or dies as an individual work. A modern painting, if the painter is any good, is as intense a spiritual adventure as any painting of the past, perhaps more so in one way since the modern painter has less given him to start with. Perhaps no phrase in current chatter on aesthetics has been more bandied about and understood worse than "the dehumanization of art." If this means a detachment from a certain traditional and specific form of Renaissance humanism, well and good; but if it means the denial of the spiritual and individual personality of the modern artist, then it is not only misleading but part of the tacit drift toward the faceless society of the future. No doubt, the modern artist often uses motifs from the Machine Age. Why should he not since he lives in the midst of it? But any structure that tends to assimilate the modern painter to the Machine Age and mass society does a disservice to painting itself.

Of course, it will be said that no museum can hope to duplicate the exquisite circumstances for enjoyment available to the private collector. To be sure. But with all the remarkable means open to modern architecture more can be done toward this end than has yet been attempted. And perhaps not so much need be done, after all. A few days before I visited the Guggenheim I had seen a very lovely show of Philip Guston at the Sidney Janis Gallery. Because I knew and had liked Guston's painting in the past, I was met by that shock of displeasure on entering that often happens when we come expecting the old and the artist has moved on to something new; but I was determined to stick with these paintings and let them come to me, if they could. Now, nobody will claim that the Sidney Janis provides ideal conditions for viewing: it is more or less a little office and warehouse which happily seems to be doing a brisk business these days. But it did have two chairs, and ashtrays by them! I managed to get into one of the chairs, hogged it for a while, and let a few of the pictures work on me. It came easy after that. Not much, just a simple chair, but it would be too humble a consideration for the great Pictorama that human beings like to sit and are likely to be more receptive doing so.

Perhaps the idea of a museum, any museum, belongs too definitely to an abstract and Alexandrian age so that the attempt to make a museum into a major architectural project is bound to be heavy and overweening. Perhaps a museum is more tolerable the more modest it is. Why not, then, have taken some old brownstone, remodeled it, punched holes in the walls and let in the light. The Guggenheim with its white walls and even white light is, I suppose, well lit, but according to a style which is on its way to becoming canonical nowadays. It is the light of an unblinking

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stare; and the paintings become lifeless and static within it. With natural light there would be gray days and bright days, the picture would change but live; and any painting that had any spizazz could ride these breakers of weather and be enriched thereby.

Why should we condone anything nowadays that tends, if even in the slightest, against the living and toward the lifeless, whether it slights the spiritual individuality of the artist or my own spiritual freedom as a gallery-goer? My course through a museum is always erratic: I may walk through the first rooms very rapidly, stop in the middle and slow down, then go back, and then forward. These zigzags of freedom are denied me at the Guggenheim. If, after I have got to the bottom, I want to go back to a single painting, I must take the elevator and descend halfway down the ramp. And what is going to happen when they want to give small one-man shows that in another building could be packed snugly and intimately into a few rooms? What would a new Brancusi show look like in this new Guggenheim?

And so we say farewell to the Pictorama, crossing over to the other side of Fifth Avenue, this time enjoying the humble functionalism of a park bench. I would not want to leave the impression that I think this building was not worth doing: everything bold is worthwhile, provided we learn from its mistakes. The trouble is that the accumulated hush-hush that has surrounded Wright for decades as an "authentic American genius" (which he certainly is), as well as the vested interests of architects without taste, will combine to drown the voices of the few who cry that the emperor is naked—or in this case is not nearly naked enough. In fact, I liked the exterior better than I had thought I would from its photographs. Some of the popular scoffing is not wholly accurate: it is not really so much like an overblown Bendix washer, or butter churner, or slightly distended accordion. Rather, in its full sweep from block to block it is an effective, if somewhat literal, parody of a ship, of about the heavy cruiser class I should say, with the rotunda as a superstructure from whose turrets guns might suddenly swivel. If it were set down beside a waterfront, and its interior remodeled for offices, it would make quite a good building for one of the maritime services.

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H. D. SCHMIDT

Bigotry in Schoolchildren

■ The recent outbreak of anti-Semitic incidents in Germany, with its juvenile chain reaction in many parts of the world, has focused attention on the school, the teacher, and the textbook as the center of hope for improving relations between different ethnic and religious groups. There exists a wide measure of agreement in America and Germany that it is primarily the schools which transmit the heritage of the past to the young, and that the schoolroom is therefore the place where group antagonism can most effectively be rooted out. It is also widely assumed that a more intensive propaganda by religious schools of the injunction to love our neighbors would help to rid society of group hatred and vandalism. But these beliefs are based on an exaggerated estimate of the influence of teachers and preachers in Western society generally, and in particular, of their influence on the minds of the young.

Evidence both of a sociological and a psychological character now exists, in fact, which strongly suggests that the school plays only a minor role in the development of basic social attitudes among children, and that the teacher is almost powerless in this area unless his work is visibly substantiated and backed up by the society in whose midst he operates. Before moving on to a consideration of this evidence, however, it would be a good idea to introduce certain historical considerations: as well as being the key to our understanding of the political sentiments of our contemporaries, history offers us some interesting data bearing on just this question of the effectiveness of schoolteaching in the formation of political hatreds.

After the year 1815, following the Congress of Vienna, schools and universities throughout Europe became subject to close political supervision with the direct purpose of preventing the young from being contaminated by "Bonapartism" and the ideas of the French Revolution. In the France of Louis XVIII and Charles X, education was placed under clerical control, and in the Germany of Metternich's time, not only were students expelled from universities for the mere utterance of revolutionary views but a rigorous censorship was enforced on all forms of the printed word. Behind these measures lay precisely the same assumptions about the gravity of teaching that are being entertained today in connection with the battle against anti-Semitism. Yet even thirty years of control over the printed and the taught word failed to achieve the desired results: in 1848 France and Germany were swept by the ideas of the French Revolution, and in Paris people wept with emotion as the old slogans and songs of the Empire were revived. How was it that those sentiments and slogans managed to survive?

The story of French revolutionary propaganda is even more astonishing. In 1794 Robespierre launched a nationwide campaign of hate against Britain with the press as his chief weapon. Napoleon continued the campaign, extending it over the whole of French-occupied Europe, until it affected the minds not only of his supporters but also—and this is the first surprise—of his enemies. The second surprise is the long-term effect of all this propaganda. A hundred years after Robespierre began his anti-British campaign, the slogans and ideas he originated came to life anew on German soil. In the dawn of the present century the German Kaiser, together with his military and civic leaders and his publicists, was interpreting the Anglo-German conflict in terms forged a hundred years earlier by a handful of Frenchmen determined to manipulate public opinion in the interest of

H. D. SCHMIDT, who has published several articles on the work of Jewish historians in past issues of COMMENTARY, is currently at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton.

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France. The same anti-British clichés were current in the Germany of Hitler and in the France of Pétain, and they have survived even in the France of de Gaulle. In other areas, too, a similar pattern can be traced. Anti-Semitic ideas have a paritcularly notorious record of longevity;* and in America political life is still to some extent shaped by feelings and notions that go back to the Spanish War and the election campaign of 1900, to the Civil War, and, of course, to the War of Independence. What history teaches is that strong animosities generated in a people by a bitter conflict *invariably outlive the circumstances that produced them.* Each generation takes possession of the language, the attitudes, and the sentiments of the culture into which it is born, and included among these are obsolete political ideas. The question is whether or not schools play an important role in the process of transmission.

IN AN effort to shed light on this question a study was begun several years ago at Carmel College, a boarding school (located near Oxford) which has been described by flatterers as the Jewish Eton, and which is indeed a pioneering venture in Jewish education. The student body is composed of about three hundred boys most of whom are Jewish, ranging in age from eight to eighteen; the curriculum is divided between general and Jewish subjects, with the latter approached in a "modern" humanistic spirit. A group of eight-year-olds fresh from their homes (and therefore not yet influenced by the College's life and teaching) were put through a series of tests to ascertain how much political sentiment they had already absorbed, so that this could later be checked against their ideas and feelings after they had lived in the College and received formal instruction in history.

These children, like all English children, play cowboys and Indians—except that they may call it British and Germans, which is a way of reliving the hours of peril through which their elders once passed long before those dramatic chapters of their history have been intelligibly presented to them in a formal lesson. When they were asked what they knew about Hitler, no clear answer could be elicited but all reacted violently to the name. Some boys made faces of disgust and others raised their hands as if to ward off an evil. In 1957 boys born in 1949 were unable to attach a clear identification to other great political names of the past such as Roosevelt, Weizmann, Stalin, and Churchill, but were quite ready to assert that all had been good people except Stalin. Their views of national groups were equally definite, though they had no personal experience of these groups or factual information about them. Each year from 1955 through 1958 the majority of new boys entering the College at the age of eight or nine consistently expressed a strong dislike of Arabs, Germans, and Russians in that order. Their friendly feelings were also fairly uniform (the Jews, the British, and the Americans enlisted their strongest sympathies). There was not the slightest doubt that these social attitudes were firmly fixed, reflecting past as well as present political conflicts, *before* formal lessons in history or related subjects had begun.

Further tests in the two lowest grades at Carmel College revealed the presence of strong anti-social feelings in all the boys—verbal and physical cruelty, aggressiveness, a deep desire to hurt, destroy, and kill. When boys of eight were asked what they would do if they became "the most powerful man in the world," their answers generally uncovered a paramount interest in food and sweets, but the boy who wanted to burn the school, shoot the principal, imprison or hang his fellow creatures, "kill some and imprison others" was by no means a rare specimen. How did the atmosphere and the educational effort of the College affect political sentiment and social attitudes?

Since Carmel College is a boarding school, its impact on students is concentrated and intense and the influence of the home is diminished (during term the boys have contact with their homes only through letters and one or two short visits). One-half of the faculty is Jewish and great care is taken to discourage group hatred of any kind; in their Jewish studies, moreover, the boys are introduced to the religious rather than the political aspect of Jewish existence. The same master has been teaching history for the last ten years and, being himself a member of a joint Christian-Jewish study group on textbooks, he has been particularly active in promoting interracial and international good will. The history master also teaches German, as does an internationally-

* For a detailed historical account, see my "The Idea and Slogan of 'Perfidious Albion,'" *Journal of the History of Ideas,* vol. XIV, 1953; and "Anti-Western and Anti-Jewish Tradition in German Historical Thought," Leo Baeck *Yearbook IV,* 1959.

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minded English lady, and both of them have testified that they have had very little success in affecting the political prejudices of their pupils.

During the period of the study (between 1955 and 1958) numerous efforts were made to spread an atmosphere of international understanding. United Nations Days were prominently kept and United Nations material was constantly displayed in the library. In order to counter political bias, geography lessons in the seventh and eighth grades stressed both the Middle East (with particular attention to the problems of the Arabs) and Central Europe (with particular attention to postwar conditions in the two German states). The eighth grade also studied the Soviet Union, its governmental structure and the organization and basic theory of the Communist party. Pictorial material was utilized and Russian music and songs were very popular with the boys. Despite all this, however, strong feelings of aversion remained quite pronounced; in a class of fourteen-year-olds a collective expression of aversion could be triggered off by the mere mention of such charged words as "the Arabs," "Jesus," or "Communist."

In order to extend the picture of the effect of teaching on the political sentiments of the boys, and to accumulate more statistical data on the whole College, tests were also given to the higher grades at the end of the summer terms of 1955 through 1957. The over-all result of these tests, which embraced all the grades up to and including the tenth, indicated that 40 per cent and more of the boys had hostile feelings toward five groups: 82 per cent toward Arabs; 70 per cent toward Germans; 52 per cent toward Russians; 47 per cent toward Japanese; and 37 per cent toward Catholics. There were only slight variations in this picture from year to year. Two other groups comparatively high in the list of dislikes were the Austrians and the Japanese. Broken down into age groups, the figures of summer 1956 were as follows.

Age:	7–10	11-12	13–15	Dislike of
	75%	83%	86%	Arabs
	60%	60%	64%	Germans
	48%	45%	36%	Russians

Thus for the three groups heading the list of social enemies percentages were fairly uniform throughout the College. Indeed the record of the children shows no basic change in the amount or direction of social hatred from the untutored boys at the beginning of their school career to the boys who had undergone ten years of the College's influence.

An important factor in the shaping of attitudes was found to be the national press. But while the boys followed the press eagerly, and found in it sufficient material to give body to their political sentiments, they were reading selectively. The press hardly initiated their social dislike, only helped to sustain them.

THE Carmel College test shows that such factors as home background and current political conflicts are far more important in determining basic feelings of friendship or hostility toward social groups than the teaching of the school, even a school whose program is consciously dedicated to promoting tolerance. A control check of a class of seventeen-year-old Israelis in a Haifa school—carried out in 1955 prior to the Sinai campaign—showed a striking similarity in the order of political aversion. The young Israelis registered their sentiments in the following way: 70 per cent felt hostile toward the Egyptians; 70 per cent toward the Germans; 51 per cent toward Arabs in general; 44 per cent toward Christian clergymen; 30 per cent toward Russians; 26 per cent toward Catholics. The difference between British-born and Israeli-born young Jews, despite all the variations in both their educational and geographical milieu, is remarkably small.

The presence or absence of Christians among the students of Carmel College made no difference in the attitude of the boys. Moreover the College is very much concerned to avoid anything that might either hurt the personal feelings of a Christian or be construed as hostile to the Christian faith. There was not the slightest evidence for the presence of any anti-Christian factor whatever in the Carmel environment. Nevertheless, the boys did express anti-Christian sentiment. There was no substantiation for the possible suspicion that something in the teaching process itself was to blame for this. The only thing that seemed to explain the presence of such a sentiment was the notion that the growth of group consciousness itself produced negative social attitudes toward close rival groups of a similar nature.

To check this theory an indirect experiment in the workings of group consciousness was set up in summer 1955. The experiment was carried out with a group of nine-year-olds in the following way: two neighboring dormitories were each told a bedtime story once a week. One of

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the dormitories was told ordinary stories, while the other heard stories expressly designed to promote a special feeling of solidarity among the boys. Group consciousness was created by using such devices as secret codes and the choice of a password and a secret sign of recognition. One of the stories centered around a valiant gang of boys who carried out their exploits under a special name; the storyteller would conclude each episode by asking, "Have you already chosen a name for yourselves?" A week later he was informed by nineteen enthusiastic youngsters that they had agreed to be called "The Nineteen Cannibals." They were encouraged to choose a leader and a lieutenant. As their group consciousness developed, so did aggressiveness toward the other dormitory—which reached its climax in plans for a night raid (this was prevented). The storyteller had always been very careful never to suggest anything of the kind. This experiment would seem to prove, then, that hostility and aggressiveness can simply be by-products of positive group formation.

The first fundamental change in the quality of social attitude showed up in the two top grades, where boys between sixteen and eighteen are prepared for their university careers, and where they are encouraged to develop a large measure of independent critical judgment. It was found that these boys no longer reacted spontaneously to social distance tests, and the inference seems warranted that a causal connection exists between the awakening of the intellect after the age of sixteen, the growing insight into the make-up of one's own mind, and a slackening off in the intensity of political hatred and prejudice. The intelligent boy of the twelfth grade in England regards expressions like "the Reds" or "the dirty Arabs" as vulgar and unworthy of an intelligent outlook. He is capable of responding to a questionnaire on his social dislikes with an air of superiority, stating that he no longer bears grudges against any special group of people. Although this pronouncement may or may not reflect his true state of mind, it does express an attitude that rules out the usual tests in his case.

The investigation described was extended to Germany in autumn 1957. At that time the political climate in Germany was radically different from the situation in England. Both the government and the press had been making a great effort to create an atmosphere of sympathy toward the Jews and the State of Israel; and the schools had been encouraged to give this effort their active support. On the other hand, German animosity against the nations of Eastern Europe had reached a pitch which far surpassed the British. With the cooperation of an elementary school at Wiesbaden some German children were given the same sort of test of their group antipathies as had been administered at Carmel College. Seventy-one per cent of the children said they hated the Russians; 46 per cent the French; 39 per cent the Jews; 31 per cent the Irish; 29 per cent the English. At the same time they listed as their favorite national groups the Germans, Austrians, Swiss, and Americans, in that order. Fifty-four per cent stated they liked the Americans, 46 per cent expressed a liking for the Dutch, 42 per cent for the Italians, while 30 per cent declared their sympathy for the British and 18 per cent for the Jews in classes where there were no Jewish children.

The tests of German children confirm many of the findings about the British Jewish children. Their group animosities were marked, consistent, and related both to present and past conflicts. Even conflicts of the 19th century were still being reflected: 12 per cent of these Rhineland children declared they hated the Prussians. The widespread antipathy against the French, too, can only be explained with reference to past conflicts. (The marked unpopularity of the Irish, I must confess, seems quite inexplicable.) There was also a noticeable difference in the rate of political aversion between children of refugees from the East and children of local residents. Conversations with the school principal and the faculty made it clear that while they were not inclined to combat hatred of Russia, they did make an effort to work for better relations with and understanding of Germany's Western neighbors and that they also cooperated with the press and the government in combating anti-Semitism. But their teaching effort—as with the effort at Carmel College—had failed to reduce anti-French and anti-Jewish feeling to any substantial degree.

To eliminate the factor of past conflicts in determining present social attitudes, the investigation was transferred to the neutral and calm soil of Switzerland where a control test of another one-hundred children was conducted.

In the secluded Alps village of Lauterbrunnen the boys and girls of the elementary school expressed their political sympathies and dislikes

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as follows: 100 per cent of them hated the Russians; 51 per cent the Jews; 45 per cent the Catholics; 45 per cent the Germans. The national and religious groups they favored most were: British, 90 per cent; Americans, 87 per cent; Protestants, 81 per cent; Italians, 72 per cent; French, 66 per cent; Austrians, 51 per cent; Dutch, 51 per cent.

Results of a test of urban children in a school at Zurich reflected the same general pattern—the only difference being a somewhat lower intensity in the animosities expressed toward other religious groups. The Swiss figures testify to the enormous impact the cold war has had on the minds of children. They also show the high degree of religious alignment in the Swiss countryside. In the Catholic Rhineland only 12 per cent of the children had recorded their dislike of Protestants, whereas in a Protestant canton the anti-Catholic reaction was much greater—and the high incidence of anti-Jewish sentiment in a village where no Jew was resident, quite unexpected. There was again no evidence to indicate direct responsibility on the part either of the village teacher or his books. The only possible conclusion is that the rejection of other religious groups had been indirectly promoted by assertive teaching and religious instruction. Another possible factor here may have to do with history. In the 1840's Switzerland was rent by a civil war which split the Federation into rival groups along religious lines. A secessionist Catholic league of cantons was defeated by the Protestant majority. It is likely that these shadows of the past still loom large in the Swiss sentimental heritage.

The evidence of history, and the evidence of these tests and experiments carried on in Britain, Israel, Germany, and Switzerland—limited in number though they were—both confirm the idea that in the development of a child *political sentiment precedes factual knowledge.* Nothing we know about the past, nothing we have learned about the group attitudes of school children, points to the school as either the source of such attitudes or as an effective counterweight to them. Two things do seem to have enormous influence on the mind of the child of school age: the political conflicts of the past, and those of the present in which the child's own group has been or is strongly involved. His sense of these conflicts comes to the child from *outside* the school. They come from his own home of course, and also from media of communication—press, television, radio—in which current political crises are reported, often dramatized, and through which the utterances of political leaders are broadcast. Political leaders attempting to impress themselves upon the public frequently use highly emotive and provocative language, as does the press; and this language often serves to direct aggressive feelings against some group or other. Not the teacher, but the parent, the statesman, the newswriter, and the commentator hold the key to the control room of a child's political sentiments. And it is group loyalty itself—surely a universal human feeling—that is often responsible for an irrational, unhealthy social animosity.

The problem of group hatreds is not one of how to loosen the hold of strong in-group feeling—that is impossible—but rather how to keep group loyalty and group antagonism within reasonable and safe bounds in a dangerous world. Friction and conflict of interests will always exist between groups as they will always exist between individuals, but they should not be allowed to lead to collective crimes. It is more honest—and indeed the only possible remedy on an individual level—to tell a young person that political hatred exists in all of us and is a natural result of our own history, but that it is one thing to harbor an intense feeling of hatred and quite another to translate that feeling into anti-social acts.

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JAMES O'GARA

Birth Control and Foreign Aid: A Catholic View

■ I am grateful for the opportunity to comment on COMMENTARY's article [February] by Kingsley Davis and Judith Blake. Under the heading of "Birth Control and Public Policy" the authors have discussed or touched upon such profound issues as the morality of birth control, the question of church-state and civil liberties, the role of authority in the Catholic Church, the workings of the democratic process, the concept of a pluralistic society, and the relationship between Catholic clergy and laity. And, in the space of slightly less than seven pages, they have created more confusion in each of these areas than I would previously have believed possible.

I do not have seven pages available to me. My remarks, therefore, will be concentrated on one point, the relationship between public policy, birth control, and foreign aid, the issue which began the current controversy—a fact that readers of the Davis-Blake article may have some trouble in recalling.

Let me begin by citing a recent State Department report. "It can be theoretically demonstrated," the report said, "that given sufficient development and utilization of the world's resources, the earth can adequately support a much larger population than any that can be expected by the year 2,000." Rejecting contraception by mechanical and chemical means as immoral, Catholic scholars agree with this statement. As they see it, the basic problem is how the underdeveloped countries are, in the language of the State Department, "to make the jump to the state of adequacy from the present situation in which most of their people are living at bare subsistence levels."

In line with this reasoning, Catholic thinkers stress the need for expansion of productive capacity, development of natural resources, measures for international social justice, and the like. But such technical questions are not at the heart of the present debate; the central point is the moral question and its relation to public policy.

To the believer, the actions of men—and of Caesar—must be viewed in terms of a God-centered morality. This is true of Protestant, Catholic, or Jew, and the question of population control is no exception.

In Japan today, more than one million abortions are carried out each year as part of the country's program for population control. Although there was considerable American influence in the establishment of Japan's birth control program, I suspect that most American citizens would strongly disapprove such a policy of planned abortions. Similarly, in India thousands of men and women submit to sterilization each year; indeed, the social worker who persuades an individual to submit himself to sterilization is paid a per capita commission. Again I suspect that the majority of Americans would disapprove of this procedure.

Roman Catholics are one with other Americans in considering such programs of planned abortion and wholesale sterilization immoral. To the Catholic conscience, however, contraception by mechanical or chemical means is also immoral, as it is to some Protestants and some Jews. Given this fact, what would our critics have us to do? When it is urged that policies Catholics consider immoral be made a part of official U. S. programs overseas, what choice did the Catholic bishops of the United States have except to repeat once more the traditional Catholic policy in this matter?

At stake here, it should be remembered, is a matter of public policy. It is being proposed that tax money be spent on a policy Catholics consider immoral, as well as politically and

JAMES O'GARA is the managing editor of *The Commonweal*, a weekly journal of opinion, published by Catholic laymen.

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psychologically dangerous. To suggest that Catholics keep silent on this issue because their views may not be shared by the majority represents a strange conception of democracy.

In discussing the Catholic Church, the Davis-Blake article employs a familiar if distasteful gambit. On the one side, the thesis goes, there are the bishops and priests, who are cast in the villain's role; on the other side, there are laymen, who are more to be pitied than scorned. The clergy resorts to "legislative coercion," brings "political pressure to bear," and insists "that the faithful obey." Catholic laymen, however, are divided into two groups, the enlightened and the still shackled, depending, of course, on whether they share the views set forth in the Davis-Blake article. The assumption is made throughout that loyalty to the Church and loyalty to America inevitably clash; the Davis-Blake Catholic is torn between sharing "democratic values" and conforming to Catholic teaching. No Catholic will recognize this picture of the Church, and it should be obvious that we are unlikely to appreciate this rather primitive line of argumentation.

To me the Davis-Blake statistical methods seem curiously free-wheeling, but whether the authors are correct in thinking they have turned up one million, two million, or even five million Catholics who practice artificial birth control is irrelevant here. The fact remains that the believing and practicing Catholic freely grants to the Church the right to teach with authority on matters of faith and morals. If I read the Davis-Blake article correctly, this is essentially what bothers them: they simply do not like the way my conscience is formed. Perhaps this is fair enough, although I should note that I find their views equally distressing and their insistence on imputing the worst motives to Catholic bishops offensive. But if I understand the American idea aright, this theological aspect of the matter is a debate between the authors and me, not between me and the government.

There is in the United States no religious test for either citizenship or public office. Questions of theology do not fall within the competence of the state, and it is not the business of the American government to concern itself with how a Catholic or any other citizen forms his conscience; in a pluralistic society in which people differ widely in religious convictions and conscientious views, government must as a practical matter simply take note of the fact when many citizens do object to particular policies on grounds of conscience.

Suppose birth control were not the issue. Suppose a proposal were made that a national lottery be carried out under the auspices of the U. S. government, with all the proceeds to go to the underdeveloped nations. As a Catholic I do not consider gambling in itself to be immoral; nonetheless I realize that it would be preposterous to make such a suggestion. Why? Because legislators, knowing that the scheme would be morally repugnant to millions of Protestants, would not consider it for a moment—and quite rightly, too. But again I can only ask why things should be so different when it is the Catholic conscience involved. Why does advancing the Davis-Blake point of view on birth control represent permissible, even commendable participation in political life, while Catholic efforts to influence national policy are described as "political pressure" and "legislative coercion"?

In the Davis-Blake article, even non-Catholic officials who do not think birth control should be part of the foreign aid program are "fearful of Catholic pressure" and "will sometimes publicly subscribe to the position of the Church on public issues instead of following their own view." If my memory serves me, in the present debate this charge would mean that such diverse figures as Dwight D. Eisenhower, Harry S. Truman, and Eleanor Roosevelt all yielded to "ecclesiastical pressure" instead of following their own views. Political figures who agree with the Davis-Blake thesis, of course, fall into quite a different category; they are, wonderful to say, "evidently better informed."

We have here in the United States a government of limited powers, in a sense broader than the usual meaning attached to the phrase. In an age which has seen the rise of the absolute state, this is a fact for which we should be increasingly grateful. I like the fact that we make provisions for conscientious objectors to war. I like the fact that Protestants' objections to legalized gambling carry real weight. I like the fact that legislation for humane slaughter must take into account the beliefs and practices of Orthodox Jews. And in the same spirit I urge that the conscientious convictions held by me and millions of my fellow Catholics should not be lightly set aside.

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Birth control is one of the most divisive issues in American life. In the course of the current debate, misleading and inaccurate charges have been made, and here I would include many of the statements in the Davis-Blake article. But one thing seems inescapable; on this issue it is impossible to reach the kind of national consensus necessary for successful public policy. Under these circumstances it seems the height of political folly to suggest that birth control be made an official, tax-supported part of United States policy overseas. The question of birth control, I submit, should be left to the nations involved and to the conscientious convictions of their own people, while popular support is rallied in this country for that which is really imperative and which the birth control debate is obscuring: the necessity to expand productive capacities in the underdeveloped nations on a scale far beyond anything we have yet done. This is a positive program on which we might all agree. To divert attention from it by a domestic controversy over birth control strikes me as sheer madness. To imagine that such a course will help the underdeveloped nations is simply self-delusion.

To my mind, the kind of thinking displayed by Kingsley Davis and Judith Blake would ultimately eliminate the influence on public policy not just of Catholicism but of all religion. Noting toward the end of their article that the underdeveloped countries will doubtless pursue their population programs whether we help or oppose them, the authors say: "The current debate in the United States over birth control is more important for this country than for the people of Japan, India, and many other 'backward' lands. . . ." On this I agree, and I think that their article provides another demonstration of how far we still are from understanding what it means to live in a genuinely pluralistic society.

[*The following letter is by the director of the department of economics at Saint Louis University, a Jesuit institution. He notes that he is himself not a Jesuit, adding, "my views are strictly mine, not those of the institution."*]

To the Editor of Commentary:

The article by Kingsley Davis and Judith Blake on "Birth Control and Public Policy" seems based on a misconception of the nature of Catholicism. Catholics believe that divine law is binding upon all persons, and that it is made known by revelation or by natural law (the nature of man). It is not a subject for individual decision nor for majority vote. Surely it would be a mistake, at this late date, for Commentary to try to make Lutherans of us by attributing to us a belief in the absolute predominance of individual conscience.

The authors' statistics on the practices of Catholics are, therefore, irrelevant. All they prove is that Catholics may commit sin, surely no surprise to anyone. Since Catholic doctrine is not determined democratically, these practices do not forecast doctrinal changes. Similarly, there is no cause to berate the bishops who did not and could not change this doctrine.

Catholics believe that birth prevention by artificial means is immoral *for all persons*, as contrary to natural law. No Catholic may, in good conscience, follow such practices nor actively promote them for others, even for non-Catholics. Whether society is well or ill served by legal prohibitions is a matter for each individual to decide, since this is a political question, not a moral one. Your authors miss the distinction. Many Catholics oppose the Massachusetts and Connecticut laws forbidding dissemination of information, just as many people who oppose alcohol may be against prohibition. The New York case and the foreign aid question are quite different. These involve spending our money to encourage immorality. You should not be surprised if we object, even though we may not bomb the Capitol if we should lose.

The majority has, on occasion, ridden roughshod over the moral views of minorities. Pacifists are forced to pay taxes to support arms, orthodox Jews for pork inspection, and snake-handlers and flagellants are forbidden to practice their religion. The majority may force us to contribute to birth-control clinics.

I would suggest that such majoritarianism be reserved for very serious matters. Is *public* participation in birth prevention of this magnitude, or are private resources adequate for the job? And if public resources are used, whose conscience is being infringed by whom?

Joseph P. McKenna

[*Mr. Davis and Miss Blake will reply to their critics in a future number.*]

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Proust and Zhivago

To the Editor of Commentary:

Maurice Samuel, while paying tribute to Proust's complex subtlety ("The Concealments of Marcel," January), does the novelist an injustice. . . . He exclaims at "the staggering unself-consciousness of Proust" in describing how Bloch, anxious to assert his superiority, ridicules the Jews at Balbec. The self-hatred plaguing the unreligious, partially assimilated Jew has been noted and commented upon many times. Does Samuel think that an author as introspective as Proust was entirely incapable of recognizing this unpleasant trait in himself? . . . If Swann represents the more attractive "Jewish" traits in Proust's own character, may not Bloch represent the more distasteful? . . .

In the description of Bloch at the drawing room of Mme. de Villeparisis, Samuel . . . seems unaware that Proust is also satirizing the socialites. Indeed, Proust apparently believes that the Jew's peculiarities are not innate, but socially imposed. . . . From this point of view, Proust cannot be considered governed entirely by "repressed malice," and certainly cannot be compared with rabid racists.

Samuel might almost be accused of a little anti-Semitism himself in taking the passages on the plight of homosexuals as a "moving lament over the historic condition of the Jewish people. . . ." Proust's interweaving of the burdens of Jews and homosexuals is thought-provoking . . . but the parallel must not be pushed too far!

Frances Weiss

Claremont, New Hampshire

To the Editor of Commentary:

I wish to record my dismay at Mr. Samuel's attack on Boris Pasternak and *Dr. Zhivago*. . . .

To the extent that Gordon's or Lara's statements can be attributed to Pasternak, they seem to testify to an estrangement from Jewishness and a harshly critical attitude toward Judaism. Now it is perfectly legitimate to deplore Pasternak's "assimilationism" and to take issue with his wrong-headed view of the Jewish tradition. But it is inexcusable to fling the epithet "contemptible" at one of the greatest and noblest poets of our time, and it is utterly spurious to accuse "Pasternak-Zhivago" of concealing his "Jewish identity" and ignoring Soviet anti-Semitism. . . .

In over-reacting to a marginal strand in the fabric of *Dr. Zhivago,* Mr. Samuel willfully refused to understand the meaning of a remarkable novel and thus, in his own phrase, "disqualified himself" as a literary critic.

Victor Erlich

Seattle, Washington

Mr. Samuel *writes:*

The riddle posed by Frances Weiss is a genuine one for which I have only a partial solution. A sensitive and introspective man may be fully aware of a discreditable fixation without being able to control it. He will indulge and satirize it in alternation, but how Proust does both with such devastating power is beyond me. I do see the contrapuntal satire on the socialites in the passage on Bloch . . . but the point made by Frances Weiss is, I think, invalid. For Proust observes sarcastically that if the Jew "passed" into the French aristocracy, his "rebellious nose, growing like a nasturtium in any but the right direction" would undo him. As for pushing too far the parallel between the homosexual and the Jew . . . it is Proust's doing, not mine. . . .

Mr. Victor begs the question when he assures us that Pasternak is also one of the noblest poets of our time. Mr. Victor grants that Gordon's or Lara's statements might imply in Pasternak "an estrangement from Jewishness and a harshly critical attitude toward Judaism." Between estrangement and a harshly critical attitude (. . . and Pasternak's attitude is more than "harshly critical") there is a vast gulf. To have dragged in the Jewish question, which has no organic relation to the theme of the novel, to have dwelt on the brutality of Czarist Russia toward the Jews, and to have ignored in the midst of much general criticism the more programmatic brutality of Russian Comunism to the Jews . . . seems to indicate that Pasternak is indifferent to the misdeeds of the Communists when they are directed at something to which *he* is hostile. This is both artistically false and morally unforgivable.

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GORDON A. CRAIG

Military Defense and Civil Concern*

■ A colleague of mine who has had some interest in military affairs confessed recently that he was completely bewildered by the discussion of these matters in Washington, and that the Senate hearings on our defense capabilities seemed to him to bear a closer resemblance to farce or musical comedy than to serious politics. At any moment, he said, he expected a quartet of presidential candidates to burst forth with a ballad entitled, perhaps, "The missile gap is no deterrent to my love for you."

It takes a considerable amount of effort to derive even mild amusement from the hearings in Washington. If the issues were not so important, there would be something richly comic about the spectacle of the Army Chief of Staff saying stoutly on Tuesday that the United States has "a considerable capacity to fight limited wars," but admitting lamely on Wednesday that we have no adequate facilities for getting our forces quickly to danger points where they may be needed; of the Vice President, in a patently political speech designed to prove that the United States need have no fear about its military strength, blandly informing his well-fed auditors that it is cheap politics for Democratic presidential aspirants to inject the defense issue into the campaign; and of the administration's attempt to make people forget the missile gap by revealing the existence of a new super-weapon (the Minuteman) which has only two drawbacks: namely, that it has not yet been successfully tested and that, even when and if it passes examination, it cannot be put into actual production for another three years.

When one remembers, however, that what is at stake in this muddled free-for-all is the security and ultimately the independence of the United States of America, none of this is very funny. Only the Russians can really have enjoyed watching the Joint Chiefs contradicting each other and speaking obvious half-truths with equally obvious reluctance, the Secretary of Defense expressing his willingness to determine our military requirements on the basis of guesses about Soviet intentions rather than informed estimates of Soviet capabilities, and the Chief of State reacting to all suggestions of American weakness with bursts of irritation, fretful references to "parochial" generals, and petulant appeals for faith in his own military omniscience. Even the venerable Representative Clarence Cannon of Missouri seems to have been dismayed by these things. At the height of last year's debate on unification of the services, he insisted, on the floor of the House, that "when it comes to military affairs, he [the President] is a general, and I take off my hat to him with heartfelt alacrity." This year, the Congressman has decided that the administration's statements about our military strength are "specious" and has said so at some length.

To READ Oskar Morgenstern's book in the course of all this is a disquieting experience. A scholar of international reputation with a long record of distinguished service to his country and with wide experience in the field about which he writes, Mr. Morgenstern says clearly and emphatically, and without the embarrassed reluctance of some of the witnesses in the Senate hearings, exactly what the "parochial" critics of the administration's program have been saying: namely, that our military capabilities are dangerously inferior to those of the Soviet Union and that the gap between the two countries is widening instead of closing. And Mr. Morgenstern does not confine himself to those aspects of the Soviet-Western conflict that engrossed most of the Senators' attention. The scope of his criticism is considerably wider than that of Senator Symington, for instance, and his view of the future is even gloomier than that of Joseph Alsop.

With respect to the possibility of the United

* A review of *The Question of National Defense*, by Oskar Morgenstern (Random House. 307 pp. $3.95).

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States being destroyed by nuclear attack, Mr. Morgenstern is completely uncompromising in his views. Security depends not only, as some people still appear to believe, upon the size of our retaliatory force but also upon its ability to escape the first enemy blow; and on this point Mr. Morgenstern is very much of General Thomas S. Power's opinion, that in the very near future the Soviets will have the ability to destroy our retaliatory force completely and in a trice if war comes. This is partly the result of our habit of publishing to the world the most intimate details concerning the location and strength of our bases and other installations, but more perhaps of the fact that our retaliatory force is not varied enough in nature or in disposition.

It is because of this last point that we cannot hope to increase our deterrent capacity by belated vows of silence or by the often made proposal to "harden" our existing bases in the United States. We are too addicted to the belief that we can hearten our allies and frighten our enemies by boasting publicly and circumstantially of our strength to change our ways at this late date, and the Russians, in any case, probably have agents capable of ferreting out all the information they need about our bases. To "harden" our installations, on the other hand, would simply mean that if war came the enemy would employ heavier attacks against them in order to render them inoperative, and this in turn would inflict greatly increased damage upon the population centers of the country, which would, of course, continue to be "soft" and would be exposed to blast, fire, and radiation hazards no matter what bombing pattern was used against the SAC bases. Given the virtual nonexistence of shelters against either blast or fall-out (one of Mr. Morgenstern's most scathing chapters is devoted to the deplorable state of civil defense in this country), the probable results are fearful to contemplate.

Our only assurance against this sort of thing, the author believes, is a continual airborne alert, involving at least half of our Strategic Air Command, until such time as we can vary our retaliatory capacities in a significant way. This will best be done by the creation of a fleet of Polaris submarines and by the development of nuclear-powered seaplanes—a force that would not be susceptible to enemy discovery and destruction and would be capable of striking deep into the territory of our most likely opponents at a moment's notice. If we could accomplish this, we would have gained a real measure of security, even if the Russians duplicated our effort. For, in the last analysis, "in order to preserve a nuclear stalemate under conditions of nuclear plenty, it is necessary for *both sides* to possess invulnerable retaliatory forces."

Even if we reached that point, we should not, of course, be free of military danger. It is unfortunate that the emphasis placed in the recent Senate hearings upon the production of ICBM's obscured the fact that we suffer from other military weaknesses that may, in certain circumstances, be crucially important. There is no doubt that the present administration's love affair with the idea of the balanced budget has seriously impaired our capacity to fight limited wars; and the persistence with which our ground forces have been reduced at a time when international crises have been increasing in number is frightening. A limited enemy attack in the SEATO area—a border incursion carried out with conventional weapons, for example—may soon, if present tendencies are continued, leave us the nasty choice between acquiescence in aggression or a raising of the ante in the form of a response with the only weapons at our disposal, strategical nuclear ones. It is for this reason that, as Mr. Morgenstern writes, "the lack of a limited war capability that matches that of the opponent increases the danger of all-out war." The only way we can insure ourselves against the multiplication of military threats in areas of vital interest to us, and also against the expansion of limited conflicts, is to acquire military capabilities as varied as those of our major rival. This will necessitate the accumulation of the kind of forces and weapons, both conventional and nuclear, that are best suited to create a limited war stalemate as well as a nuclear one.

To raise such a force and to meet our other defense requirements is going to impose a burden on the nation's economy which some people believe will be too heavy for us to bear. Mr. Morgenstern sees no reason for this fear and is inclined to argue, as Hans Morgenthau has argued very persuasively, that it is always the politicians rather than the economists who doubt our abilities in this respect. It may require the elimination of tail-fins and other consumer luxuries, but there is little doubt that we can afford to defend ourselves if we are prepared to subordinate our love of creature comforts to our awareness of the nation's danger.

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"Those who maintain that an inflation is the worst fate that can ever happen to a country," Mr. Morgenstern writes, ". . . have certainly not tried to imagine what war with Russia would mean, or peaceful surrender." If we are willing to put first things first, we will not suffer economic disaster, and our other gains will be great. By matching and neutralizing the Soviet bloc's wide range of military capabilities, we can restrict the East-West conflict to the diplomatic, economic, and ideological sphere, where mistakes of omission or commission are not immediately catastrophic and may even be made good.

WHETHER we are in fact prepared to make such an effort is, in Mr. Morgenstern's eyes, doubtful. In every area of national life he sees slackness, distortion of values, lack of persistence, and general fecklessness. "Such is our schizophrenic behavior," he says at one point, "that, though we are in various degrees aware of the tremendous danger to the country, one can safely predict that nothing decisive will be done. There will be much comforting talk from high places and the usual little stabs in this or that direction . . ."; but nothing more.

Few readers of this challenging and forthright book will find themselves in complete agreement with the author's criticisms of American policies and institutions. One has the impression that, once he began to lay about him, he had difficulty in restraining himself; and his violence seems at times disproportionate or misdirected. It is, for instance, doubtless true that American universities have not responded, and are not responding adequately to the emergency that confronts the nation, but it is hard to see exactly what Mr. Morgenstern's criticisms of boards of trustees, university deans, and the American method of selecting college presidents have to do with this. Similarly, the author's attacks upon American diplomacy seem excessive and his suggestions for improving our negotiating techniques gratuitous. American negotiators have not been as naive—at least not always—as Mr. Morgenstern seems to think. To take an example that he himself has chosen, it is hardly fair to say that, in our objections to the attempts of certain countries to extend the old three-mile limit to their sovereignty to a larger figure, our diplomats are acting "in the unthinking fashion of a lawyer who sees no farther than across the small print of a dusty

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piece of paper." Our position is to be explained rather by the fact that, whereas to concur in an extension of territorial waters would involve us in political embarrassments, and might even hamper our military operations in a number of places of strategical importance to us, we cannot simply override the requests of others and must argue on the basis of law. One may be permitted, finally, to doubt that our economic diplomacy would gain much from a policy of giving priority in our aid programs in underdeveloped countries to "conspicuous installations" which will impress the common man, rather than to basic reforms designed to make the economy strong enough to resist the appeals of Communism.

But these are points somewhat removed from Mr. Morgenstern's main line of argument, which is as convincing as it is disturbing. Despite the recent obfuscations in Washington, it is undeniable that the threat to the country is great and that popular determination to do anything about it is sporadic. If George Jean Nathan were compiling a new edition of his *American Credo* today, he would probably substitute for the simple beliefs of an earlier age ("That all criminals get caught sooner or later," "That all Swedes are stupid fellows and have very thick skulls," and the like) some of the current American illusions which Mr. Morgenstern cites at the end of his book. These include such beliefs as that we are going to "win" because we are free and moral, that the Russians are dissatisfied with their regime, that a planned economy like Russia's won't work anyway, that we make up in quality what we lack in quantity, and that Russian scientific advances are due entirely to spies and defectors and won't continue. It is this credo that discourages sacrifice and effort; and one puts down Mr. Morgenstern's book with the uncomfortable feeling that many of those who have the greatest influence in molding American public opinion have made it their own.

New York's Population

THE NEWCOMERS. By OSCAR HANDLIN. Harvard University Press. 171 pp. $4.00.
WAGES IN THE METROPOLIS. By MARTIN SEGAL. Harvard University Press. 211 pp. $4.75.

Reviewed by NATHAN GLAZER

THESE are the third and fourth volumes of the New York Metropolitan Region Study, of which two volumes (*Anatomy of a Metropolis*, by Edgar M. Hoover and Raymond Vernon, and *Made in New York*, by Roy B. Helfgott and others) have already been published, and which will run to nine volumes in all. The over-all aim of the New York Metropolitan Region Study (to quote the jacket of the books) is to "[analyze] the present economic condition, the indicated course of development, and the probable future of the New York Metropolitan Region." In such a study we expect to find an analysis of the flow of jobs in and out of the metropolitan region, and the factors—wage rates, transportation facilities, availability of skilled and unskilled labor, presence of markets, impact of government policies, availability of space and other necessary facilities—which affect the movement of business enterprises. What we do not ordinarily expect to find is an account of the ethnic composition of the city. For does it matter to the central aim of a study like this that the labor force of New York is in large part Negro and Puerto Rican, that the market is in part a Negro and Puerto Rican market, that the governments which make many decisions important for business enterprises may be affected by Negro and Puerto Rican votes, that the urban facilities which business will help support are (to some extent) for Negro and Puerto Rican families? Apparently the directors of the study thought it did. The two books under review—one entirely devoted to the Puerto Rican and Negro groups, and the other dealing mainly with the role of wages in New York—suggest what the ethnic character of a metropolis may mean for its over-all economic development.

As a sketch of the ethnic history of New York, and a detailed description of the characteristics of the latest immigrant groups, Professor Handlin's book is superb. Those of his admirers who have regretted the somewhat looser approach (looser in the sense of light documentation—

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not in thinking or control of the material) that has characterized some of his recent work will be happy to find here a heavily and solidly documented study which must in future serve as fundamental to any thinking about the significance of the peculiar social composition of New York.

Since all the great cities of the world are likely to be called (and in some sense are) "cosmopolitan," it takes a certain effort to realize how special New York is. Paris is almost entirely French, London almost entirely English, Tokyo almost entirely Japanese, but New York is a different story. In 1860, Professor Handlin tells us, *three-eighths* of the city's inhabitants had been born either in Ireland or Germany, so that (with their children born here) these two ethnic elements certainly formed a majority of the population. In the 1920's and 30's the Jews (three-tenths of the population) and the Italians together formed close to a majority. Today, perhaps one-seventh of the population is white Protestant—and this includes many people who must be of German, Scandinavian, Hungarian, and other origins. It is believed that one-half of the total white population of this country is of Anglo-Saxon origin, but it is hard to see how more than one-tenth of the white population of New York can be composed of this element.

Two by two, then, different ethnic groups have come into the city, grown to very large size, and been supplemented by new elements: the Irish and the Germans between the 1840's and the 1870's, Jews and Italians between the 1880's and the 1930's, and now Negroes and Puerto Ricans. In 1957, these newest arrivals already formed a fifth of the city's enormous population.

There is no point in making too much of sheer dimensions, and yet one must get a sense of the order of magnitude of the phenomena one discusses. In 1957, about 20 per cent of New York's population was Negro and Puerto Rican, about 26 per cent of the children in the public schools came from these groups, as did about 52 per cent of the occupants of 90,000 public housing units; the percentages of those who use public hospitals, get in trouble with the police, etc., are probably similar. All these figures will undoubtedly go much higher—if for no other reason than that most American Negroes still live in the South, and that the population of Puerto Rico, where unemployment is high and shows little tendency to decline, increases by 35,000 to 50,000 a year. But even aside from the huge pools of impoverished people which can still be drawn on to increase these groups, there is the fact that their rate of natural increase is much higher than that of the white population. When one-quarter of the children in New York are Negro and Puerto Rican, it is reasonable to expect that at least one-quarter of the population will soon be Negro and Puerto Rican, but the final figure will certainly be larger than that.

The "final figure"—one naturally assumes that this process will some day come to an end as previous waves of migration came to an end, that those already settled here will recover from the shocks of uprooting and transplantation, get better jobs, develop a stabler family life, achieve higher incomes. This is not an implausible perspective. Yet there is no "natural" history of migration and adjustment. To say, as some people do, that the Irish and Germans, and then the Italians and Jews, once created the same problems for the city, and "look at them now"—is to ignore how various the processes of adjustment have actually been. To come into New York at a time when the chief forms of employment for new groups are unskilled labor and artisan trades (as was the case when the Irish and Germans arrived) is a very different matter from coming at a time when the chief kinds of work available to immigrants are found in the growing needle trades (Jews and Italians) or when the main jobs are unskilled work in small factories, in commercial laundries, in hotels and restaurants (Negroes and Puerto Ricans). For example: the German artisans had a valuable property in their skills, and could organize powerful unions and make relatively good wages; the Jewish needle-trade workers were able to set up in business for themselves because of the tiny scale of operations in the needle trades and the small amounts of capital involved; but where can a Negro or Puerto Rican go who is now assembling electronic equipment, or working in the kitchen of a huge hotel? The paths to higher income and independent entrepreneurial activity from such beginnings are not at all obvious. This sketch is, of course, both incomplete and exaggerated. But there is no question that it contains a large measure of perplexing truth.

To SHIFT to another aspect of the "natural" history of assimilation—there is much talk as to whether the newest immigrant groups are

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more disorganized and present greater problems than earlier immigrant groups. Professor Handlin is particularly good on this point—he is aware that such distinctions have existed in the past. (For example, the Irish created many more problems than the Germans; conceivably there may have been a difference between the Jews and Italians in rates of criminality and disorganization, though this was in any case not as sharp.) Probably such rates are higher when the immigrants first come, then tend to taper off. But as Lester Granger, speaking of *The Newcomers,* points out in the *Amsterdam News* of February 6: "Beside the fact that color is a bigger handicap in the United States than a foreign language or a different cultural background, there is also the fact of the timing of this recent wave of migration. This is a period when family life as a whole has been drastically changed—when parental controls are weakened and effective controls have not yet been applied. This is a time when there is an unprecedented amount of foolishness and filth assiduously peddled by television and the radio, as well as the movies and newspapers that were our only communications media forty-five or fifty years ago."

This is quite true—the early Jewish and Italian settlers were not subjected to the strains that now affect Puerto Rican and Negro families—not to mention the fact that the Negro family for the most part never overcame the disorganizing heritage of slavery.

So the "natural" history of immigration and assimilation is not so natural—it depends on specific historical patterns, and to expect an inevitably benign outcome is to misread history—and Professor Handlin is quite clear about this. Nor is it possible to speak simply of a final figure, a "natural" term to immigration. Immigration waves do not have a natural limit; they do not resemble biological organisms. The Germans stopped coming to America because the rapid economic development of Germany after 1870 made immigration to foreign cities less attractive than migrating to other cities within Germany. The Irish stopped coming only when most of them (literally) were already here. The Jews and Italians ceased coming only because they were stopped by immigration laws. For the Negroes and Puerto Ricans, these three quite different possibilities also exist—that economic development in Puerto Rico and the South will make those areas more attractive than the Northeast (this is unlikely for the Negroes, since they are effectively excluded from Southern society); that Puerto Rico will be as depopulated by emigration as Ireland once was, and most of the Negroes will eventually settle in the North and West; or that some legal means will be found to prevent American citizens from moving about to their advantage—a rather unlikely possibility.

What all this suggests to us—as Professor Handlin emphasizes—is that the future is not foreordained, and that the makers of policy cannot abdicate with the argument, "We have seen it all before, and it will work itself out just as it did before." Even if there were no element like color in a color-conscious country, it would still be true that "it" has worked itself out in different ways and with different effects; and if we have any image of what a good city and a good life ought to be like, we will require something more than a flabby acquiescence in the free play of economic forces.

Mr. Segal's book offers much interesting material, some of which is directly relevant to a consideration of the impact of Negro and Puerto Rican migrants on the city. The most important conclusion one draws from *Wages in the Metropolis* is that no strong evidence can be found to support the idea that the heavy flow of unskilled immigrant labor into the city has served to bring wages down. It is difficult to sum up a complex and subtle argument, especially in

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areas like wage rates, which are affected by a multiplicity of factors. However, it is worth noting that in some lines of work in which very many of the newcomers have found jobs—the garment trades and service occupations—New York's wages are among the highest in the country. Conceivably these wages would be even higher were it not for the immigrants—hotel employees, and most other categories of workers, make even more in San Francisco than they do in New York. As for the impact of Negro and Puerto Rican migrants on New York's over-all economic position, it seems minor. One would think that the miscellaneous small manufacturing plants in New York that employ so many Negroes and Puerto Ricans and that also pay low wages are here only because of the availability of this cheap labor. But Mr. Segal shows that these segments of industry pay considerably higher wages in New York than they do in the South, or the depressed coal-mining towns of Pennsylvania, or the textile towns of New England. Indeed, Mr. Segal thinks that such industries, for which low-cost labor is an important consideration, will continue to leave the city and that at most, the new waves of immigration have tended to slow this movement down. The service trades, which employ large numbers of Negroes and Puerto Ricans and to which this labor is important, cannot of course move away. But again, we should not exaggerate, for while it may be hard to see how the cost of hotel rooms or restaurant meals or hospital services could be any higher than they are today, it is unrealistic to think that these industries would be unable to manage if the stream of immigrants were smaller.

Mr. Segal's book (which contains much more than these brief comments suggest) leaves me with the impression that economic considerations need not be paramount in our thinking about the new immigrant groups. American industry did not collapse because immigration was cut off in the early 20's, nor would New York go into eclipse if the flow of newcomers to the city were sharply reduced. We should be as skeptical of the argument that we can't (economically) do without them as we are of the argument that we can't afford them. And since economic considerations are not in reality the paramount factor, we are left uncomfortably free to consider other sides of the impact of new ethnic elements on the city, and uncomfortably responsible for trying to forge other ways of thinking about them.

A Peculiar Liberal Voice

THE UNFINISHED COUNTRY. By MAX LERNER. Simon and Schuster. 733 pp. $7.50.

Reviewed by MIDGE DECTER

One may clasify the nature of Mr. Max Lerner's work in many ways (none of them quite satisfactory). He is a journalist or contemporary historian or sociologist or interpreter —vague word—of that still vaguer thing, American civilization; his own description of himself is "a cryptographer of our time." This work he carries on in several capacities—teacher, lecturer, scholar—but none, I would guess, is more liberating, more congenial to his preoccupations and his kind of perception than that of columnist in the New York *Post*. Certainly *The Unfinished Country*, a selection of his columns of the past ten years, testifies to a perfect coming together of calling and occasion. The columns get written, he tells us, here and there—in his lap, as it were—usually in the small hours of the morning, and are about anything that happens to interest him at the moment: a book, a play, a death, a news story, a public figure, occasionally a family matter. Read in bulk, they convey an enviable picture of Mr. Lerner as a man who has a feeling for everything (aroused, perhaps, because he has a column to write, but so much the better for him) and who is not only permitted but expected to express it. A man who, as the literary critics say, has with little trouble found his voice—and is not displeased at the way it sounds. The picture of a man doing what he so much enjoys doing is as rare as it is enviable.

Mr. Lerner is unique among American columnists, not only because his "field" is practically indefinable, but because of the very special relation he sets up with his readers. He does not tell them, as all other columnists do, what lies behind the news or what is going on elsewhere in the world; his readers are the subject of his columns, and it is they themselves he interprets. Ranging easily from the marital difficulties of Ingrid Bergman to the multiple murders committed by a psychotic boy to problems like McCarthyism, desegregation, academic freedom (while stopping now and then to make a plea for tolerance toward homosexuals), Mr. Lerner gently but earnestly lectures, prods, explains, always acting as the middleman and message-bearer between the professional stu-

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dents of American civilization—primarily the sociologists and social psychologists—and their subjects. But he is less a popularizer than a counsellor. He wants Americans to know that there are pundits and professors and authors and playwrights who have found significant methods by which to understand their behavior. And he wants to persuade them to look at their own lives and the world around them in the special terms he is making available. "The fact," he says, "that the intellectual climate of America was beginning to shift from the public to the private made it easier for me to reach my readers with these columns than it would otherwise have been." By this bit of Riesman-esque analysis, he finds conditions right and the role he has conceived for himself justified.

To play the role of middleman, Mr. Lerner has found it necessary to be part professor, part "psychoanalyst," and part trusted old friend:

> "Here are a few conclusions that thoughtful people may draw from the Kinsey Report on the American female. . . . one thing that women can learn from [it] is not to set impossible standards for themselves, to accept themselves, their bodies and their mode of response—and relax. To the American men Kinsey seems to be saying, 'Don't feel too superior and condescending.'"

In a column about the case of Authurine Lucy, the Negro girl who was stoned on the University of Alabama campus, Mr. Lerner has this to say:

> "Every mob, in its ignorance and blindness and bewilderment, is a League of Frightened Men that seeks reassurance in collective action. This rabble tried to reassure itself by enacting the ritual of white supremacy. . . . The tragedy is that no one really stood up to them."

About mothers who kill their children:

> "Yet there is also an element of pathos in the love the mother feels for the children in the very act of killing them. She dresses them neatly before she takes them into the auto to asphyxiate them, or she combs their hair carefully before she strangles them. It is part of the ambivalence by which so often each man kills the thing he loves."

In his characteristic rhythm of thought and rhetoric—describing some baseness, stupidity, or horror and at the same time undercutting it by the use of a literary or psychological insight—the author of these passages strives to express a complexity of intelligence that will be superior to both the simple-mindedness of moralizing and the follies of passion. What he achieves instead is a kind of bloodless formula for "understanding" everything in the same way. He is a man for whom tolerance is no longer a principle by which to judge what he sees but has itself become his only method of seeing.

Mr. Lerner is entitled to the satisfaction that seeps everywhere into his tone. What other newspaperman in America could throw his once-hot daily pieces into a book and feel that while time had cooled them it had thereby only enhanced their value as comment on the world? Moreover, after ten long years that were as troubled and confused for the America he was analyzing as any decade in history, he had neither to shift his perspective in looking back nor make apology for a single important mistake. There were no problems of perspective for Mr. Lerner because though he was writing about daily things for daily consumption he was also writing in a small way for history—in ten years, say, and be a document); he was summing up as he went along. Nor, it must in truth be acknowledged, did he make any important mistakes. He has indeed mastered the "one art" he set out to master in writing these columns—"the art of the general proposition."

Generalizing about a culture from discrete, casual details—particularly about American culture—is a chore; done even by the most graceful hands (Lionel Trilling's, for instance), it usually shows some strains of the sweat that brings it forth. But you will not find the smallest hint of labor in the 700-odd pages of Mr. Lerner's book, which suggests that he has done even more than master the art of the general proposition: it may be that he has stumbled on some secret of its application. This secret, the principle on which Mr. Lerner operates so fluently, might be called "the law of the excluded judgment." It is what accounts for his virtues as a columnist (which are considerable), his weaknesses as a prose stylist (which are not great, but crucial), and his rather depressing failure as a liberal critic of American society. This principle depends on the ambiguity of the word "culture" and implies the following argument: things are bad in this country today, maybe worse than they have ever

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been, but they do have a genuine correlative in what Americans are really thinking and feeling and so are neither bad nor good, and therefore good. The ambiguity that attaches to Mr. Lerner's use of the term culture carries over even into the title of this book. No one, except maybe the most hard-bitten ideologue, would dispute the applicability of the word "unfinished," or would deny that things will change, develop, *happen* in America's future. What Mr. Lerner intends by this word, however, is some essence of the *quality* of American life. All right, fair enough; but from this descriptive point Mr. Lerner arrives in his introduction at the following elegiac one: "Always striving, always hungry, never satisfied, the American spirit jibes well with the inner meaning of a world of process and continuity . . . an open universe of tragedy and conflict and choice." Mr. Lerner is free to believe that motion by itself is a good thing, but it seems strange that one of the leading spokesmen of American liberalism should assume so easily that the direction of this motion must necessarily be good.

OR PERHAPS not so strange, for what we have here is a liberalism that has been sophisticated out of its former belief in the efficacy of energetic opposition to social ills and psychoanalyzed into a belief that social "welfare" of some kind will follow directly from human self-knowledge. Thus, the high rate of juvenile murder in this country Mr. Lerner attributes to a bad cleavage between the generations that can be repaired by greater understanding. Thus, he blames the ever-accelerating breakdown of the family on the "false" and excessive demands that Americans make on life and suggests that the trend toward disintegration will be reversed when people grow "mature" enough to stop making them. Thus, instead of advocating that the senseless and anachronistic abortion laws of this country be abolished, he proposes to alleviate the misery and waste and suffering these laws are responsible for by extending the definition of "therapeutic abortion" to include the psychologically therapeutic. Thus, he instructs the American worker, squeezed between the bosses of capital and the bosses of labor, to fight "for a chance to develop himself as a human being, with his own stamp and uniqueness but with a special quality because he is a worker and therefore close to productiveness."

What Mr. Lerner continually does in these columns is to demonstrate that the institutions of our society are an embodiment or expression of "consciousness" (which can mean either "national character" or "the universal unconscious," depending on which meaning happens to serve his purpose). He therefore cannot criticize the society, as did his old-fashioned liberal forebears, in terms of criteria like "just," "equitable," "equal," "sane." The meaning of such terms, and the values they express, can no longer be taken for granted; they must now grow out of some definition of the needs of the human personality (about which, of course, the "scientists" are learning more and more each day). The difference here may seem merely methodological, for on specific issues of politics Mr. Lerner stands where a liberal would be expected to stand. But his departure is in fact more than methodological, and his *trahison* to the tradition from which he claims his identity —though it will never show up in the polling booth—is blatant and active. By pinning his moral judgment to his anthropological sense of American culture, he has transferred his primary loyalty from a vision of what that culture *ought* to be to a loving fascination what what it *is*.

Unlike an old-fashioned liberal, "a cryptographer of our time" is not, it would seem, a man devoted to an orderly and rational and legal assault on the evils of his society but a man devoted to *explaining* them—finally, one fears, to explaining them away.

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Vichy France

FRANCE DURING THE GERMAN OCCUPATION, 1940–1944. Edited by PHILIP W. WHITCOMB. The Hoover Institution. 3 vols. 1644 pp. $20.00.

Reviewed by MAX BELOFF

FILIAL piety is a virtue—children should be jealous of their parents' reputation. And Pierre Laval's horrible end in no way relieves us of the obligation to assess his tangled role during the German occupation of France. For both these reasons, there is nothing intrinsically reprehensible about the attempt of Laval's daughter, Mme. de Chambrun, to promote a kinder historical view of her father by collecting statements from those living in France at the time and other supporting documents. But there should surely have been some doubts about sponsoring the publication of Mme. de Chambrun's documents on the part of the responsible authorities at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, at Stanford University—sponsoring them, moreover, without any clear explanation that the documents were collected with a particular partisan end in view. For this collection—even if "published in accordance with the policy of making available to scholars and to a broader public unique collections of historically important documentation bearing upon various aspects of recent world affairs"—does not at all compare with other, unbiased volumes from the Hoover Institution. The sympathies of the translator of these volumes, the journalist Philip W. Whitcomb, emerge from his references to "Maréchal Pétain's dedication to the principle that a new France should be born" and to Pierre Laval's "determination that an old France should not die." By publishing this tendentious work under such a misleading title, the Hoover Institution, to which so many of us owe so much, has greatly damaged its reputation and the reputation of American historical scholarship in Europe.

When these volumes were first published in 1957 in French, they provoked an outburst of protests from French historians concerned with the Vichy government and the Resistance. A group of them, indeed, produced a systematic refutation*—each main theme of the volumes was taken up and the evidence separately dissected. The refutation did not use statements made long after the event, as these books largely do, but reviewed the contemporary record of events in all its darkness and horror. The picture that emerged was very different from Mr. Whitcomb's.

It should be emphasized that the Vichy period already has an important literature; copious firsthand contemporary material is available from both French and German sources. Previous collections of documents published by the Hoover Institution have always given ample references to other source materials and to the bibliography of the subject. Mr. Whitcomb's presentation fails to do anything of the kind. Instead, Mr. Whitcomb has the effrontery to say that he hopes his own experiences in France "will warn professional historians against accepting any one source or group of sources without checking against many other sources of a contrary character." It is precisely the existence of such sources that his compilation ignores. It is not simply that other sources exist which are as damning to Pétain and Laval as these are favorable to them; it is that they are sources of a quite different kind—archival records of the brutal facts, not glosses made afterwards.

TO BEGIN with, there is the question of the 1940 armistice itself: what was Pétain's intention in demanding it? was there any alternative? For the solving of these questions, Mme. de Chambrun's documents provide no new material. They do make an untenable claim—namely, that the armistice itself included the requirement of "collaboration," which made it impossible for the Vichy government to behave otherwise. This is deliberate mystification. What the armistice required of the French was that the administration in the occupied areas should cooperate in keeping the ordinary public services going. This had nothing to do with political collaboration. On the contrary, these documents simply add further proof of two facts already abundantly documented elsewhere—namely, that even before the military collapse Laval had cherished the notion of basing French policy on political collaboration with Nazi Germany, and that he wanted to destroy the traditional structure of parliamentary government in France. It is also clear that in these schemes Pétain had long been destined for a vital role.

A brief attempt is made in the volumes under

* *La France sous l'Occupation*, by P. Arnoult and others, with a preface by Daniel Mayer (Presses Universitaires de France, 1959).

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review to revive the thesis that Pétain was acting in secret agreement with Britain. The falsity of this claim, too, had been demonstrated in detail in various writings by General Schmitt, who turned to the theme in his critique of the French version of the Hoover volumes. No question of a political agreement ever arose between Vichy and London. The French were solely concerned with the minimizing of the hardships of the blockade; the British wanted to avoid making things too hard for the French—but this was subject to the overriding necessity of the struggle against Germany. London would undoubtedly have liked to get Vichy to resist the Germans, but all its efforts in that direction failed.

"Collaboration" in the precise sense of the word does not figure largely in these volumes. This is partly because Laval himself was out of power for most of the period before April 1942; and, after November 1942, the question was one of total French subordination to Germany rather than of mere collaboration. Nevertheless, collaboration was the issue in two periods—between the Montoire Pétain-Hitler meeting in October 1940 and the first removal of Laval in December; and again at the end of 1941 and the beginning of 1942, when there were negotiations for France's entry into the war on Germany's side. What brought these negotiations to nothing was Hitler's indecisiveness as to what would best suit Germany, rather than any reluctance on the part of Laval and Darlan. Here the German archival evidence would seem to be conclusive. The legend that Laval and Pétain simply sought to preserve France's strength against the day of liberation will not stand up against the evidence of Vichy's direct initiatives to be allotted an active role in Hitler's "New Order." Vichy policies made sense only on the presumption of a German victory, just as de Gaulle's policies made sense on the presumption that the Allies would win in the end.

For example, German economic exploitation went far beyond the claims which the French had originally accepted in the armistice. The extra French payments enabled the Germans to plunder France with her own money. Cathala, Laval's finance minister from 1942 to 1944, makes the point here that many vital decisions which contributed to the debilitation of France were made before Laval took over in April 1942. But the idea that the extra financial contributions were wrung by force from a reluctant Laval will not stand up under examination. Laval himself wrote on January 12, 1943, to the German negotiator on the question: "I have stated to you that France's payments have gone beyond the idea of occupation costs and constitute in reality a French contribution to the defense of Europe: that it was in a wish to collaborate and to make . . . an effective contribution to Germany's war effort that I accepted these supplementary payments."

Also, counting prisoners of war and civilian deportees together, France supplied more male labor to Germany than any other invaded country, Russia included—and this does not take into account the casualties of war, the prisoners and deportees who never returned, and the victims of German massacres and murders in France itself. To give a picture of France under the occupation deserving of the name, something should have been quoted at firsthand of the experiences of such citizens; but here we have only the apologias of the men in power.

On the tragedy of the Jews in France, we are already all too well informed, thanks largely to the devoted work and methodical publications of the Paris Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, which has placed on permanent record the ghastly evidence provided by the captured German documents. The evidence assembled makes it quite clear that the compilers of the Hoover Institution volumes have shown their usual disingenuousness concerning the Vichy record on Jewish questions.

In the French cooperative refutation to which we have referred, M. J. Billig, who himself worked with the Centre and was a member of the French delegation at the Nuremberg war criminals' trial, has pointed out a number of the patent dishonesties in these books. Thus, the testimony of a certain Antignac is quoted without noting that he was head of the police section dealing with the anti-Jewish measures, and that he was sentenced to death for his crimes. Again, we find the president of the French Union for the "Defense of the Race" declaring that his organization did not indulge in any anti-Semitic propaganda. This overlooks (as do the Whitcomb volumes generally) the fact that the Vichy radio gave itself to propagating the more extreme versions of Nazi anti-Semitism.

The main document here is the testimony of Xavier Vallat, who was responsible for Jewish affairs during Darlan's tenure of the Vichy premiership; this piece of mendacity has been published before. Vallat does not deny his personal anti-Semitism, but gives a completely

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fraudulent account of the extent of the measures taken to purge French professional and economic life of Jews—measures as severe in the unoccupied as in the Nazi-occupied zone. There is no mention of such important events as the law of October 1940 permitting the internment of foreign Jews residing in France. Vallat gives the impression that he is talking of a few dangerous or criminal individuals when he alludes to what were in fact massive transfers of Jews from internment in the unoccupied zone to camps in the north, and so ultimately to deportation and death. He passes over the fact that the mass arrests which took place in the German-occupied zone were begun by the *French* authorities.

On the "final solution," the attempt to deport all Jews in France (as in the rest of Europe) to extermination camps, the Hoover Institution volumes are practically silent. Their only concern is to depict Laval and his collaborators as trying to delay handing over at least the "native" French Jews. But while it is true that the French police originally refused collaboration in the interning of French Jews, the impression is falsely conveyed that this halted the general round-up of Jews.

That Laval himself was particularly anti-Semitic is improbable; but he headed the French government when the law of October 1940 was promulgated, and this law introduced the whole principle of racial differentiation into French administration. Laval's purpose is actually confirmed in one of the documents now printed; believing as he did that France had to become an active partner with Nazi Germany, he had to make the French State one with which the Nazis could collaborate, and this involved accepting the principles of racism.

It may be true that even more Jews would have died but for the delays imposed by Laval and others in handing them over to the Germans. But two facts should be borne in mind. In the first place, Laval had to reckon with public opinion to some extent, and increasingly so as the *maquis* became more active. Secondly, the suggestion that if he had resisted further the Germans might have replaced him by some mere Quisling—a Doriot or Déat—overlooks the German interest in keeping France governed by an administration with at least some roots in the country. The alternative was too expensive, and the extermination camps were busy enough so that they could wait a little longer for the remaining French Jews. It was the Resistance and the Allies who saved them in the end.

This is not, of course, to suggest that those responsible for the Hoover volumes are particularly indifferent to the terrible sufferings inflicted upon the Jews of France under the regime they are defending. There is no anti-Jewish discrimination here, for they also fail to give a proper picture of what happened to the people of Alsace-Lorraine, to the other civilian internees and deportees, and to the prisoners of war. The treatment of the Jewish question is only part of a general attempt to make the whole Vichy regime (except for Darnand and the *milice*) qualify for the epithet of resisters, while the genuine resistance movement is ignored or traduced.

Only the most cynical view of history could permit the equating of those who perpetrated or condoned the massive crimes committed in France in 1940–44 and those who strove, often at terrible risk, to avert them or to overthrow their perpetrators. Where collaboration was embarked on as part of a policy which looked toward the permanent domination of Europe by Nazi Germany—and such was Laval's policy—it can only be condoned if Nazism itself is condoned. In the publication of these volumes, there enters a question of morality, as well as of scholarship.

An Attack on Privacy

THE EAVESDROPPERS. By SAMUEL DASH, ROBERT E. KNOWLTON AND RICHARD F. SCHWARTZ. Rutgers. 484 p. $6.50.

Reviewed by MAIRI MACINNES

THE initially striking and ultimately perhaps the most appalling characteristic of the world of *1984* was that it lacked privacy altogether. The book was an unpleasant shock to most of us: it all happened a bit too close to home. But *The Eavesdroppers* goes one step further and informs us that in some ways Orwell's fictitious world is already in existence. It seems certain, for example, that the anonymity of life in the city which used to be one of the great urban charms has now gone forever. The kinds of surveillance, of citizens by the guardians, which Orwell described, which because of their range and apparent inevitability make up the horror of that fictitious world of his, have been on our actual market for some time, and therefore in use, whether legally or not. They include

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wire-tapping, closed-circuit television, high-powered telescopes, two-way mirrors, and concealed microphones ("bugs"). The authors of this survey have painstakingly investigated the true story of these devices in the face of the sometime evasion, denial, and lies of nearly all those who use them. Each tackles a section in turn. Samuel Dash, who directed the investigation, first tells of eavesdropping practice—as soon becomes apparent, eavesdropping is far too whimsical a word. In the second, Richard Schwartz gives the technical background, and in the third, Robert Knowlton explains the legal situation.

Two points stand out. The first is the extent to which the police employ eavesdropping equipment in the different states of the union to which the investigators went. In some, evidence so obtained is admissible in courts of law. In some, it is not, or is only so under special circumstances. In either case their use is concealed from the public as far as possible. The policemen's argument goes like this: what you, the citizen, don't know we know, won't hurt you (unless, as sometimes happens, you get blackmailed). The extension to the argument runs: what you don't know we know may even do you a power of good, because if you knew we knew, you would raise a shout at the loss of your privacy, a hitherto inalienable right: and then the bookies and racketeers and call girls who rely on the telephone would be able to object to the use of taps.

It is true that both state and federal law on the subject is confused, owing partly to the comparative newness of electronic devices, partly to their universal use whatever the law, and partly to the spy scare. Federal law bans tapping: certain states allow it by court order: hence the federal law is not enforced. No one in government, especially no one who has to produce results for electors, is anxious to rob the law-enforcement officer of a useful extension of his power. How useful that power is and how easy to wield we can see from the examples of employers who bug their rest-rooms to find out whether their men are disloyal or fraudulent, restaurateurs who bug their tables to hear if the customers like the food, and private detectives who openly advertise that they have the latest in electrical eavesdropping equipment. At the same time, it is clear that these examples represent a fairly idle kind of activity. Eavesdropping by police is far more sinister. The health of a society depends, after all, not on the relations between police and criminals but on that between police and public. When police install taps or bugs, they are in effect laying traps, and taking over some of the functions of a secret, or political, police. When they go so far as to break and enter in order to plant a bug or when they bug a conversation between a suspect and his lawyer in a prison cell or when they have to rely on eavesdropping informers, as is generally necessary in tapping cases, the health of the society is obviously jeopardized. The convictions chalked up to the credit of law and order are gratifying to the district attorney, but unfortunately the penalty will always fetch up first of all at police morality itself. It is the old question of power and corruption.

These are perhaps naïve-sounding observations in view of the stunning amount of evidence collected here on the clandestine and illegal lengths to which law-enforcement officers and even legislators go in order to do their duty. With the decline of liberalism in the West has come a decline in respect for the sovereignty of reason. It is a legacy of the totalitarianism and the fears of war. No personal principle, it seems, is worth holding up against the will to win. Even though law-enforcement officers exercise great pressure on the legislators and have until now prevented their passing strict laws on electronic eavesdropping and prescribing strong deterrents, we must devoutly hope that public opinion, now that it can be informed by *The Eavesdroppers,* will demand that the police respect the integrity of the people. Without the help of public opinion it would be impossible to prevent a police chief from installing taps in excess of the small number recommended by the Savarese Committee, which, it will be remembered, conducted a special study into the illegal interception of communications in New York. The Savarese Committee thought this small number of taps should be worked through leased lines connected through the telephone exchange and strictly supervised by the court. But tapping wires and planting concealed microphones is terribly easy. The licensing of gambling and even of prostitution would do more to bring police problems within bounds, but probably it is too much to suppose that the gap between the morality represented by legislation and actual private morality, widening as it seems to be, should ever close.

The other striking point about this book, and

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one which argues strongly against the tacit condoning of eavesdropping which is so much to be feared, is that it should have been written at all, let alone with the backing of a grant from the Fund for the Republic, under the sponsorship of the Pennsylvania Bar Association Endowment. In Britain there tends to be a general hopefulness about the way officials behave, blemishes on the record being often blandly excused, because the British tend to believe that the British act from the highest motives. It is a habit of mind not unfairly called hypocritical, though, paradoxically, it may still be perfectly honest. Only America, one feels, could produce a book of this sort: that Samuel Dash could write such an indictment, often from the evidence of the same people who at first maintained that wire-tapping and bugging were unknown to them, argues toughness and independence of character on both sides that an outsider can only wonder at, and admire. Eavesdropping is always called "a dirty business" and yet "necessary," as if it were a war weapon. For it to flourish as it does, and yet for it to be completely exposed in its whole dreadfulness, in and by one and the same society, is evidence of a tremendous social strength, with strange roots in conflict, anomaly, and perhaps even anarchy itself.

It is extremely disappointing that such a notable and important book should be presented in a charmless and unreadable fashion. The technical section is admirably clear and that is all that is required of it, but the legal section is a solemn example of jargon. Dash's own writing, on the practice of eavesdropping, seems weighed down by the mass of his material. It is hard to understand why he did not use a straightforward narrative of the investigation or else a plain judicial style of exposition. As it is, his section falls awkwardly between a loose and repetitious collection of data and a really detached and scholarly history. As it is equipped with neither a proper acknowledgment of the common reader nor any sort of an address to him, whatever pleasantness occurs in the telling tends to be inconsequential. However, irritation alone should not stop readers from learning the true and remarkably full story of how nearly their liberties are threatened, and some will even be glad that there has been no stooping to the persuasion of good writing.

Book Reviewers in This Issue

Gordon A. Craig, author of *Makers of Modern Strategy* and *The Politics of the Prussian Army*, is a professor of history at Princeton.

Nathan Glazer is co-editor (with Davis McEntire) of *Studies in Housing and Minority Groups*.

Midge Decter has contributed to *Partisan Review* and *Midstream*, as well as to Commentary.

Max Beloff is a regular contributor whose most recent article was "Tension in the Western Alliance" (September 1959).

Mairi MacInnes, a novelist and poet, recently came to the United States from England. This is her first appearance in Commentary.

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THE ISSUE [*continued from page (a)*] ideas of the old religion as to make them incapable of renovation; they become irrelevant to experience in the sense that they can neither explain life satisfactorily nor offer consolation to the new psychological types that have quietly been produced by the accumulation of changed circumstances. For example, Paul's complaint against Judaism was that it made demands on him that he could not fulfill; but the reason he could not fulfill them, or be fulfilled by them, was that he represented a psychological type with which Judaism had never been designed to cope—the "sick soul," as William James described it, burdened with a sense of terrible inadequacy (sin) and obsessed with thoughts of corruption and decay. And such a type would probably not have emerged in Israel if not for the steady incursion of Hellenistic influences which had so powerful an effect on the Jews of the 1st century B.C.E. The second necessary condition is the appearance of a prophet. Now a prophet may appear (as did most of the Hebrew prophets) to recall the priest-ridden people back from the letter of the law to the spirit. If, however, the law has finally been rendered obsolete by circumstances and psychology, he may find himself becoming—perhaps even to his own surprise—not a refresher of the old but a bringer of the new. Of course false prophets also appear from time to time, trying to do the same thing. How are they to be distinguished from the true? The only way, curiously enough, is by success. The true prophet is a man blessed with what may be called perfect spiritual pitch, the man who does in fact articulate the deepest aspirations of his age in terms which make sense out of a previously senseless situation. For the agonies with which he has been struggling in his own soul turn out to be the very ones that are running wild in the world around him, seeking expression and alleviation. "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" cried Paul, and I doubt whether his cry—or the answer to it—would have echoed so far if so many people were not about to experience a rush of oppression at their sodden corporeal weight during the next few centuries.

No TRUE prophet has so far appeared in our time, but to me it seems obvious that the stage is beautifully set. In his remarkable analysis of the steel strike, Daniel Bell observes that we no longer have words to describe the nature of our economic life. But are the words we have for describing the nature of our moral and spiritual lives any more adequate? Circumstances have outstripped the ideas of the old religion in every corner of our experience, and though for isolated individuals these ideas can still be made to seem applicable, relevant, and satisfying, for the mass of people—and especially young people —they have lost their power to move and compel just as surely as the Roman pantheon began to do in the age of Constantine. That a new psychological type is being produced in America also seems obvious; its agonies are written large as life all over the juvenile courts, and for these agonies our churches have yet to provide a remedy. (Paul Goodman has something to say about *that* elsewhere in this issue.)

But to return to Mr. Hook. If a true prophet should appear, his revelation would be acceptable to reason because it would illuminate life so powerfully as to compel rational assent; it would, in other words, provide a new way of understanding the world, new categories, even a new logic. And of this revelation God would inevitably be called the author, because God is not (as Feuerbach thought) the name men give to their highest aspirations and noblest ideals, but the epithet they attach to the most significant insights into the nature of their experience as beings who are half flesh and half spirit, finite and yet burdened with an inescapable vision of the infinite. —N.P.

FORTHCOMING

- The Dullness of American Politics *Dwight Macdonald*
- Seven Nazis Were Hanged: An Eyewitness Account *Arthur Settel*
- The Albert Einstein College of Medicine *Myron Kolatch*
- The Sino-Soviet Axis *Roderick MacFarquhar*
- In "Controversy": Discussions of Alfred Kazin's "In Puerto Rico" and Paul Goodman's series on youth.
- And a new department, "In the Community." By *Milton Himmelfarb.*

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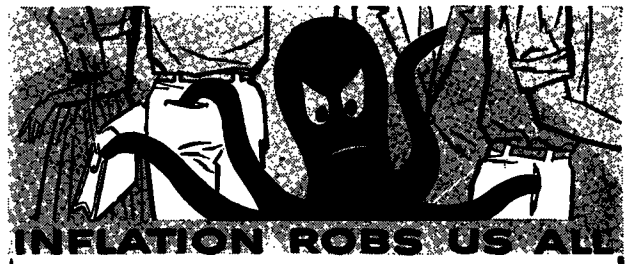

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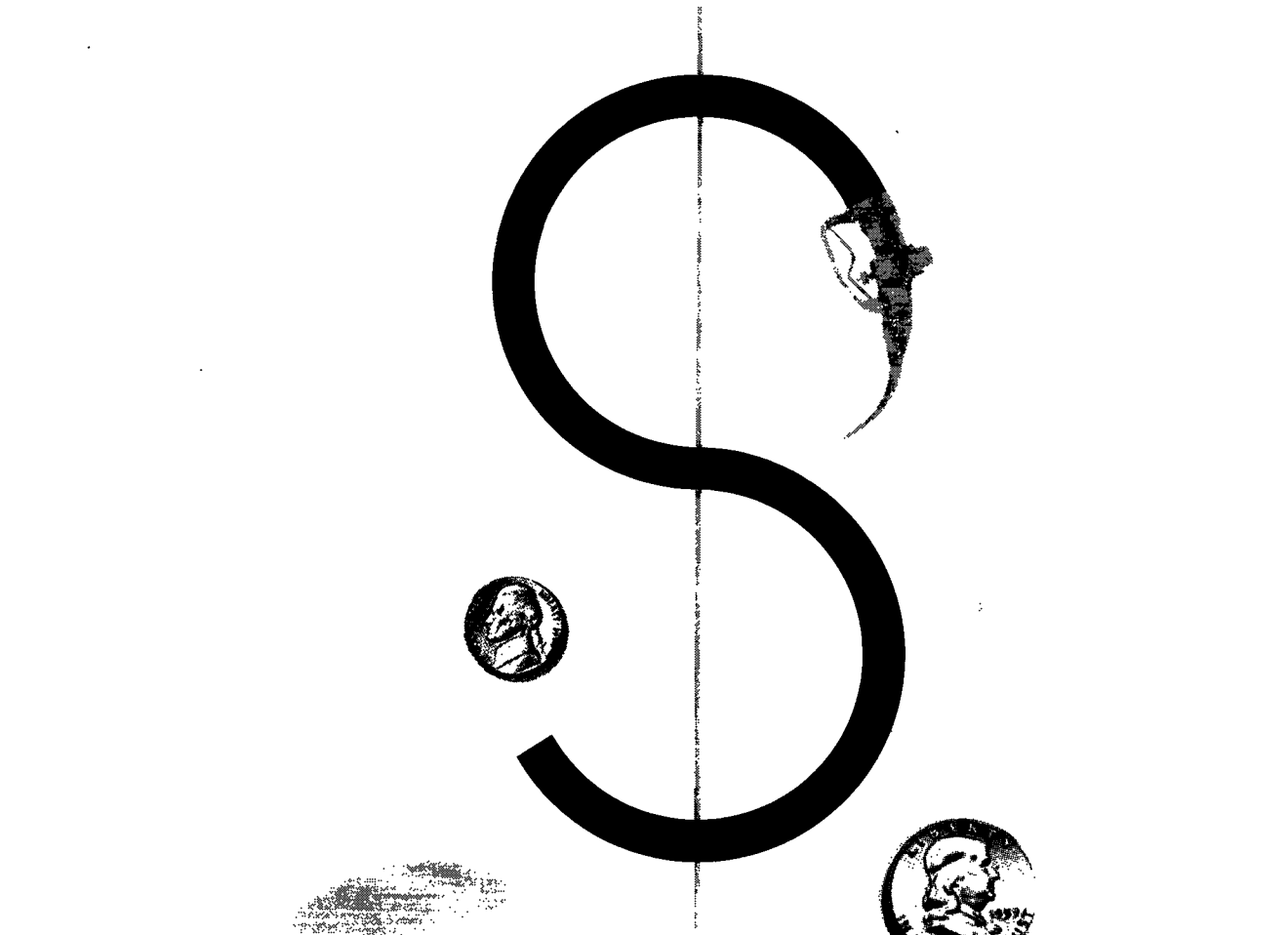

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